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ABSTRACT

This field manual for composition teachers, written by community college and University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) writing instructors, examines practical and theoretical problems and strategies associated with teaching composition. Essays in chapter I, by Ruth Mitchell and Faye Peitzman, underscore the relevance and implications of writing research to the classroom. Chapter II describes several flexible and successful teaching methods. Jo An Simmons and Stephen Montgomery detail two tutorial methods, Jo Ray McCuen explains a system in which small groups of students edit each other's writing, and Patricia Taylor demonstrates the possibilities of stylistic imitation. Four additional teaching techniques are also covered: the use of editing sheets and peer comments to encourage the revision of papers before they are turned in; sentence-combining; exercises to help students improve clumsy bureaucratic styles; and methods to move students from personal-experience writing to objective-analysis writing. Chapter III includes Sharon Scull's article on tactics for teaching English as a Second Language, materials on UCLA's composition placement procedures, and Faye Peitzman's essay on a study of writing in various disciplines at UCLA. Chapter IV provides reviews of 17 major works on writing and teaching composition, including books on how writing develops, works to aid students in writing and thinking, philosophies of composition, and books on the problems of research. A selective bibliography is appended. (HB)

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In the Trenches

Help for the Newly Recruited, Shellshocked, and Battle-Fatigued Teachers of Writing

PATRICIA SIMMONS TAYLOR
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Introduction

The law of chaos is the law of ideas,
Of improvisations and seasons of belief.
—Wallace Stevens

Over a dozen community college teachers and several UCLA writing instructors, representing about 300 combined years of teaching experience, joined to write this field manual for composition teachers. During a seminar funded by the Exxon Education Foundation, these teachers examined the near chaos called teaching writing. They crystallize in this book their insights, experiments, and acts of faith —turning "the law of chaos" into "the law of ideas, of improvisations and seasons of belief." They offer to any composition teacher ways of teaching writing that actually work, methods that have been field tested with extremely diverse student bodies.

Two larger problems emerged through the various discussions and presentations. One is the need to change the image of Miss Fidditch, the archetypal English teacher, hovering over the world with red pen in hand. The other problem is the way so many students view themselves. They rarely see themselves as writers. Feeling anxious, even hopeless, with pen in hand, they work like drones, fumbling on paper toward some benighted view of what the teacher wants.

Particular essays included in this book were chosen with an eye toward changing both those images. The teachers stimulate, encourage, and guide work but do not inhibit and paralyze students with endless rules and mechanistic approaches. The students feel respected and supported in their struggles.

The Exxon participants, although now teaching locally, came from all points of the compass. Students they teach are aged 17 to 70 with IQ's and background equally varied. Yet the UCLA and community college teachers shared basic assumptions about how people learn to write. Here are the assumptions:

1. That writing takes time. Unless given time to scheme, dream, incubate ideas, and to edit later, students will write essentially the same composition over and over. Even teachers who themselves try to write in-class essays usually panic.
2. That revision is where things happen. Most growth occurs before that final draft, not after it's all over.

3. That peers make a good audience—motivating, stimulating, supporting. Students deserve more than their eagle-eyed, judgmental teachers. No real-world writer would survive with such an unsympathetic reader as the too typical English teacher.
4. That student involvement is of the essence. Frequent teacher-designed assignments and eloquent teacher-lectures: these won't help. Nor will intense comments on final drafts. The student needs to think, worry, figure out mistakes, want to improve, and feel supported enough to know he can.
5. That we must exploit both oral and reading skills—both will improve writing.

Since the writers of this book are both researchers and classroom teachers at the college level, their articles combine research with practice in a thoroughly integrated way. The first section argues that teachers must respect the "law of ideas" and that they learn their best roles from research. No longer teaching elite, well-read classes, teachers cannot sit merely as judge and jury on completed products. They must play varied roles. They play sensitive helpmeets in encouraging the students to seek their own intentions, to find their own voices, to affix meaning to their own experiences, to make sense of their own worlds through writing. They become kind readers to provide the one service all writers need in their vulnerability—being helped toward self-confidence. They eventually wear editors' hats, professionally concerned with the final appearance of students' work.

The two "how to do it" sections present methods that arise from the complexity of the classroom, offering strategies and insights which theory alone cannot provide. The "law of improvisations" sometimes must rule the classroom to provide energy, significance, and creativity. Teachers, like writers at their craft, must create or allow a sort of chaos if a higher order is to evolve. The Garrison Method, the Tutorial Method, and the Editorial Committee Method seek the involvement and the genuine growth of students by cultivating an atmosphere in which students can write confidently. A section on creative imitation details old-new ways of absorbing the principles and practices writers have always employed.

Various strategies that follow respond to serious problems in the profession. One problem is teacher burn-out. Charles Donaldson found the O'Hare method useful in saving the teacher time and energy. The danger that the whole labor-intensive English profession would burn up while the students wouldn't even feel warm prompted O'Hare to figure out a way teachers could spend one-tenth the time they usually do marking papers. Solution—students work harder. Another problem, that of short, choppy, paralyzed sentences, led to the technique called sentence-combining. The opposite problem, that of overlong, overblown, voiceless, rocklike prose led Professor

Lanham to develop his Paramedic Method. And the problem of moving students from personal modes of expression to the kind most often needed in college and in the job market—expository, objective prose—prompted Donald Heidt's exercises and assignments that move up the ladder of objectivity.

Any one who has sat baffled by the complexity of trying to teach writing to a classroom of students from many different countries will appreciate Sharon Scull's mini-handbook on teaching English as a Second Language. Even if you encounter only a few students a year with dialect interference, her chart analyzing writing strengths and weaknesses of ten ESL types of students will prove invaluable.

Recently *Nation* noted that what used to be done in a few years of schooling—teaching basic literacy—slowly became strung out into eight years, then into twelve, and now takes up college years too. Whether or not this view is accurate, we now have something like a nationwide effort to tighten standards, to hold down the inflated grades and deflated results. This kind of effort needs cooperation along all the segments of educational systems. The university must help set standards. Thus, UCLA instructor Mike Rose examined writing in various disciplines at UCLA to see what modes of writing are used. Verdict: almost all expository. We thus include here his rationale and syllabus for concentrating on expository writing—subdivided into definition, seriation, classification, comparison and contrast, analysis, and synthesis. To show UCLA's entrance exam standards, we also include an actual essay exam complete with samples of student responses ranging from very good (for one hour's work) to extremely weak.

The last section of the book addresses teachers too busy with their craft to keep up with the field. We drew up a list of works important in some way to the teacher as scholar and as philosopher, but chiefly as teacher. Each reviewer tried to show implications for the classroom in books summarized.

All of us wish to thank the Exxon Education Foundation, especially Walter Kenworthy, for the financial support without which the UCLA/community college seminar would not have been possible. In the sometimes rigid world of grantsmanship, Exxon generously allowed us certain valuable leeway in designing and redesigning the seminar.

For the financial, clerical, and moral support that made the publication of this book possible, we are grateful to Dean Juan Lara and the Office of Academic Interinstitutional Programs. Patricia Nicholas and Karen Thompson typed perfect copy for the publishers. We thank also Susan Bukowski and Leslie Borden for their assistance with parts of the manuscript.

Lewis Thomas in *Lives of a Cell* describes the utter blindness and stupidity of the termite working alone. But, he notes, as if by magic, when sufficient numbers of termites congregate, they build

intelligent, air conditioned, well designed structures. We find an analogy to the lowly termite when we see human beings doing complex, life-centered tasks. Often befuddled and ineffective when working alone in our pride and anguish, we are not nearly so effective as when we join efforts and talents. Gifts distributed among the race come together and illumine each other. We hope that is what has happened with this book. We wish you, too, would join your insights to ours. We hope you will give us suggestions, ask questions, and think of other areas you need to see explored in the second edition. Please direct your suggestions and inquiries to the person whose name bylines the particular essay or book review. Listed in the back of the book are those who participated in the seminar and in some way contributed to this book.

—Patricia Simmons Taylor

CHAPTER I

Research in Writing and What It Means for the Classroom

Why You Should Care About Research in Writing

RUTH MITCHELL

Research in writing should help the classroom instructor. But the process of research is analytical whereas writing is synthetic. As Roger Shuy states in his closing remarks to the NIE-FIPSE Grantee Workshop, "Writing is a kind of macro event that is difficult to see in a micro way."[1] Research tends to focus on constituent parts of the writing process or product, so that it either misleads classroom teachers by seeming to offer easy panaceas, or it earns their contempt because it doesn't apply to what they're doing. The following survey of recent research is itself a macro not a micro event, for it is intended to assemble what's important and indicate what's worth pursuing.

Writing is a linear phenomenon, reducing experience—we might even say chaos—to a one-dimensional linearity which unfolds left-to-right in space and first-to-last in time. Because our sensory, mental, and emotional experiences do not present themselves in such constricted packages, the reduction to linearity is unfamiliar to many students. Stephen Krashen of USC asserts that proficiency in writing is directly related to the amount of experience with reading—pleasure reading, he believes.[2] If students have been readers under the bed covers with flashlights, they will have no difficulty. They will have acquired the written language as they acquire a first language, by unconscious absorption. But if they have to learn the written language in late adolescence, they will perform as we do when we have learned a second language—hesitantly, trying to use memory, grammar, and logic instead of instinctive patterns.

Shuy and other linguists have characterized the differences between spoken communication and writing to show why students from a highly oral culture may have difficulty when they have to write. (You will remember that Mina Shaughnessy uses much of this research in *Errors and Expectations*.) "Utterance" is holistic; it communicates not only through word and gesture, but also through shared background, body language, anticipated agreement. "Text" must replace the spoken dependence on context with precision, complete information, logical structure. This research implies that students need to learn what written communication means and how

it differs from their usual modes before they can write effectively. Clearly, writing represents a social context with which many are not entirely familiar, but one that their presence in college shows they would like to enter more deeply.

The writing process, too, is linear. No writing jumps full-blown from the mind as Athena burst from Zeus' head. It requires a process of development which includes incubating an idea, writing drafts, rewriting, and editing. But it is not naively linear, for recent research has established that the process is recursive. As it develops in time, the process may require the writer to recycle back to the beginning with some part or even the whole. In a very useful issue of *College Composition and Communication*, December 1980, you will find current process research summarized in brilliant articles by Sondra Perl, Nancy Sommers, and Mike Rose. They show that process must be taught to students, especially those with no experience of linearity, so that they do not expect to be able to capture their thoughts in one draft and so that they understand that revision is not a matter of adding commas. Nancy Sommers compared the revision processes of accomplished writers with those of student writers, and found that expert writers make major revisions in substance as draft succeeds draft, whereas inexperienced students cannot understand what is meant by "revision" beyond superficial verbal substitutions. Mike Rose emphasizes the students' need to understand process, for "premature editing" can actually cause "blocking," the inability to produce the writing required in an examination, for example.

Research at the other end of writing—reading the product—reinforces a need for a changed attitude towards surface correctness. The Document Design Project has pulled together psycholinguistic research seeking principles for writing better public communications.[3] (Some help for income tax form instructions at last!) Reading proceeds from a series of hypotheses unconsciously formed and then confirmed or denied. We read for meaning and don't usually examine every word, especially if our forward-looking guesses are confirmed. We also depend very heavily on world knowledge for comprehension. Very few passages of writing are purely self-referential, a fact which makes programming computers to "read" a more complex task than just providing a dictionary. People also need help from typographic layout and tabulation in understanding complex instructions and explanation. Paragraphs are really visual aids.[4]

Writing teachers should read students' papers as they would read normally—that is, read for meaning, not for correctness. Research into the history of the language, beginning with Sterling Leonard's *Current English Usage* in 1932, has demonstrated that the language is constantly changing and that usage is not subject to logic or to mistaken notions of Latin-based grammar. Recently two other studies have appeared to counteract the malign influence of the "pop grammarians"—Edwin Newman, Richard Mitchell, and John

Simon. Jim Quinn in *American Tongue and Cheek* demonstrates that every stricture enforced on beginning writers—don't confuse "between" and "among," use "his" or "her" after "every," don't write "it's" for "its" and so on—have been violated by revered writers, the presumed bastions of linguistic orthodoxy. Joseph Williams hides the same message in a trap he sets for the unwary in *College Composition and Communication* for May 1981: he involves his readers in what he is saying and then challenges them to find the 100 mistakes embedded in it! Of course, only a few spelling errors have caught the readers' eyes, because they have been reading as they normally do, not as they read students' papers.

When seen from a broad perspective, writing research is performing the essential function of research—changing our understanding by adding new knowledge. A new image of writing as a process which can be compassionately taught should be accompanied by a new image of English teachers. No longer correctness-oriented inhibitors of expression, they should become appreciators, eager to engage the substance of what students have to say.

Notes

1. *Moving Between Practice and Research in Writing*, p. 167.
2. Krashen frequently gives lectures on his theory of language acquisition and language learning and its consequences for the teaching of writing. A call to USC's Department of Linguistics would discover when and where he's going to speak next.
3. Felker, listed in the short bibliography.
4. I have just completed a paper with Rick Eden of the University of New Mexico on the true nature of paragraphs. They aren't miniature compositions beginning with a topic sentence and concluding with a summary sentence, sandwiching three sentences of development in between. Instead, they are visual units which arouse expectations of unity and coherence in the reader.

The following bibliography is intended not to burden you with heavy discussions of methodology, but to introduce you to accomplished writers who now lead the field.

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What's Wrong with Our Composition Teaching?

FAYE PEITZMAN

The creative processes of fiction writers we know well. Drawing from letters, notebooks, diaries and manuscripts, scholars weave bits of facts into a process story—the making of a work of art. Thus we know that Faulkner, for example, creates patchworks—writes his straightforward narrative and then cuts and pastes to create flashback sequences. And while collections of manuscript studies dramatize that there is no "one best way" to go about writing, they also reveal that our most talented writers share special qualities: somehow, all allow themselves to tentatively draft words on a page, and, somehow, they have the tenacity to read and reread, to write and rewrite.

And what of student writers? Before Janet Emig's (1971) seminal case study on the composing processes of twelfth graders, researchers and teachers concerned themselves exclusively with final products—occasionally so they could describe them, but more often solely to evaluate them. While we've most respectfully—and often lovingly—studied the processes of our Faulkners and Virginia Woolfs, we've ignored how our students go about creating their own works.

Yet if we as teachers are to help students produce better products, we need to know more—more about our students and more about how they write. What are their attitudes toward writing? How do they respond to writing assignments? Do they perceive their peers as helpmates, their teachers as sensitive responders? How do students' behaviors and processes differ from those of experienced/professional writers? Can we use the key words "tentative" and "tenacious" to describe students? Do they allow themselves to write down words that they know will not be the final ones? Is their "stake" in writing sufficient to enable them to carry beginning ideas through to completion? And—if not, why not?

The Time Line of Composing: Recursive Patterns

Think, outline, write, rewrite, stop. While many textbooks have been teaching students that writing is a straightforward affair,

researchers have been documenting that composing is actually a recursive process. In their thinking and their writing, writers "go back" in order to push thought forward. James Britton (1975) and his research team demonstrated the importance of rescanning a work-in-progress when they attempted to write with an inkless pen. Because it was impossible for them to refer back to the sentences they had already written, they could not complete tasks that called for formulating principles or writing poems.

From observing teacher-writers compose aloud, Sondra Perl (1980) noted how writers also go back to their "felt sense"—a sense that both precedes and informs conscious thought:

> *When writers pause, when they go back and repeat key words, what they seem to be doing is waiting, paying attention to what is still vague and unclear. They are looking to their felt experience, and waiting for an image, a word, or a phrase to emerge that captures the sense they embody. (p. 365)*

Perl, labelling the going-back-to-go-forward "retrospective structuring," found that while this process characterizes both skilled and unskilled writers, the unskilled, because of their internalized model of the composing process (think, outline, write, stop), often work against themselves: "Those who realize that writing can be a recursive process have an easier time with waiting, looking, and discovering." (p. 368)

Sharon Pianko (1979) also noted community college writers' problems with composing. During their pauses, they seemed neither to be returning to words on the page nor to their "felt sense":

> *Remedial students, during their pauses, were glancing around the room or staring mid-air, sometimes as a diversion and at other times hoping the correct spelling, correct word, or something else to say would suddenly appear to them. They usually didn't look to their own text for the answers by rescanning what they had just written; perhaps they did not feel they could find the answers there. (p. 14)*

Students' Composing Processes: Learned Limitations

Surely classroom teachers are not solely responsible for students' "internalized model" of the writing process. However, we must admit some responsibility. For example, what kind of message might students pick up from the impromptu essay exam? Writers are people who produce masterpieces in one 50-minute sitting? Ridiculous to experiment with shaping new ideas, trying out new styles? At best, students will succeed because they can draw on what had been incubating for other purposes. At worst, students will begin writing without ever coming to terms with the "problem" of the writing

task. And then there's the middle ground: the bright student who decides to avoid psychically or conceptually difficult topics in favor of more "programmable" paths.

Another example: What effects might the advice "outline, outline, outline" have on student writers? Writers must know precisely what they intend to say before they begin writing? Yet research has clearly shown that important discoveries not only begin before writing, but extend beyond the final draft.

Along the same lines, what of "magic formulas" for writing that are "given" from on high? "Here is your assignment. Write 5 paragraphs. Each paragraph should be seven sentences. Use thirteen details. Make sure your conclusion repeats precisely what you've already said." Researchers have been finding that writing by formula just doesn't work. What the students learn is that the formula is all-important, not the meaning that they try to "stuff in."

Students have internalized other messages too. Writing is to be read only by the teacher; no one else knows, no one else can help. Writing is to please a teacher, not the self. Correctness is all-important; even when teachers *say* they care about the meaning, the only marks on the paper are corrections of mechanics, not responses to content.

Enabling Environments

Clearly there is a difference in ability level between student and professional writers. It would seem, however, that differences in process—directly or indirectly taught and learned—are much greater than they need be. Both Emig (1971) and Pianko (1979) have stressed that the composing processes of young writers vary according to whether work is "self-sponsored" or "school-sponsored." The writing that individuals initiate on their own is both superior in quality and more extended in process. Speaking of school-sponsored writing, Pianko noted:

> *There is just so much energy a person is willing to give to please others, and there is just so much energy that a person can expend at any one time for composing. (p. 11)*

On the other end of the spectrum, Mimi Schwartz (1980), studying writers engaged in self-sponsored writing, writers as disparate as a professional poet composing poems and an 11-year-old boy composing narratives, found that the *similarities* in process were striking. Chronological age alone isn't what separates "student" from "experienced" writing processes. Rather, commitment to work writers initiate themselves and unlimited time they allow themselves to complete it are important.

Young people who write for their own enjoyment behave more like experienced writers. But does school-sponsored writing have to be limiting? What would happen if students did play a major role in shaping their own works, if they had extended periods of time to complete their papers? What would happen if they had the benefit of a more "enabling environment," one in which:

1. The classroom would have a workshop atmosphere—where tentative efforts are the norm.
2. Students would have help in developing and leeway in selecting writing topics.
3. Students would write in drafts.
4. Students would have assistance with their writings-in-progress from both peers and teacher.
5. Students would have a teacher who was not so much examiner-evaluator as concerned reader and editor.
6. Students would have the opportunity to compose where they wished.
7. Students would have time to complete more ambitious attempts?

The Composing Processes of Three College Freshmen

Recently, I completed a case study of three college freshman writers, writers who did have the benefit of such a school-sponsored writing environment. After engaging in small group and class activities, students wrote the first draft of a paper at home. After sharing draft 1 with a peer group, they wrote draft 2—again at home. After receiving written responses—not evaluations per se—from their teacher, they typed the third and final "press perfect" version.

The major finding: students' writing processes can resemble those of more experienced writers. Students can internalize a different —more enabling—model of the writing process, one that teaches that students' intentions do count, that all writers feel vulnerable at times, and that all writers deal with ambiguity and risks.

More detailed findings and implications for teaching follow.*

1. What are student writers' attitudes toward writing and revising?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
There is no homogeneous "student attitude" toward writing-revising.	Teachers must acknowledge that the classroom is composed of individual students—students who bring with them unique attitudes toward writing.

*Anyone who would like more background information concerning the research is invited to write to the author at UCLA Writing Programs, 371 Kinsey Hall.

Writers' attitudes toward writing are subject to change over time; they can change dramatically during the course of one semester.	Teachers have a key role in helping to effect positive change.
Writers vary in their attitudes toward their abilities to write particular kinds of pieces, i.e., some know they can write objective essays, but are convinced they can't write stories.	Teachers can guide students to understand that self-fulfilling prophecies are dangerous to them.
Writers offer very personal reasons why they value—or don't value—their own finished works.	Teachers who know why students value particular works are in a better position to help them.

2. What do writers bring with them to specific writing tasks?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
Writers bring with them their entire experience to each writing task, necessarily making "personal connections" if they are to respond to the task at all.	Teachers must help students to make each writing task their own.
A writing task is not a set stimulus that will evoke like responses in all students.	Teachers should expect that students will respond to and understand writing tasks in different ways.

3. When do writers revise?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
Writers revise at all "stages" of the composing process.	Teachers should let students know that writers continuously re-see.
Revision may begin as early as moments after an assignment is given and may continue after the final product is submitted. *Major* revisions may occur early as well as late.	Teachers should allow students extended periods of time to complete some of their papers.
When writers' original intentions for a paper change, particularly as a result of expectations proving false —i.e., something essential about the way they view the world is disproved —the process of their shaping for themselves and for readers goes through several stages.	Again, teachers must give students time to tackle the more difficult writing tasks.
Prewriting revision is often most important in terms of larger issues —and subsequent changes tend to follow from these newly formed overall intentions.	Teachers have an important role in helping students to formulate topics and angles for topics.
Patterns of revision are inextricably linked both to the ways in which	Teachers should understand the extent to which they control

teachers set up writing opportunities and to the nature of the particular tasks.	students' writing processes. They should also understand the necessarily different strategies for in-class, timed essays and papers written at home.

4. What would characterize an "enabling environment" for student writers?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
When teachers help create an environment that enables students to believe that it is their own intention that counts, then students begin to be "committed" to their writing. When students understand the nature of the composing process for all writers, and when they trust their teacher and peers, they are more likely to endure the ambiguity and take the risks that will push them to grow as writers.	Teachers must ascertain what the enabling environment is for each class and for each student.

5. Are extensive revisers the better writers?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
"More" is not necessarily "better." Teachers and researchers must distinguish between purposive and uninformed changes; i.e., did the writer make changes because his perception was that the teacher wanted the writer to "do something"?	Teachers must lead students to understand that to change is not necessarily to improve.

6. What part do teachers, classmates, friends, and relatives play in students' composing processes?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
Particularly in the beginning of a semester, teachers can neither assume that they understand the students' intentions nor assume that students understand their written comments.	Students should have the opportunity to "respond"—in writing or in person—to the teacher's comments.
There is evidence that with time, writers can be nurtured to accept, benefit from and value peer responses. Help received from peers is a function of both peers' abilities and the author's own receptiveness.	Teachers cannot assume that peer groups will "work" the first time they meet, nor that they will succeed without guidance.

Students' inclinations to share drafts with outside readers will vary.	Teachers can lead students to value sharing drafts with others. Some students have never asked anyone to read their writing; they have to be made aware of their potential audiences.

7. When students are successful in one mode of writing, does that success "transfer" to other modes?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
The kind of "transfer" that *can* occur when a student succeeds with a particular type of writing: A. A positive attitude about engaging in writing and about personal status as a writer; B. A desire to experience again the sense of ownership/authorship in all kinds of writing; C. The inclination to press to find "personal connections" for every writing task; and D. The realization of the importance of satisfying the self as well as satisfying the teacher.	Teachers must remember the affective dimensions of all human endeavors and accomplishments.

8. How can we best account for students' growth in writing?

Research Findings	Implications For Teaching
The story of a writer's growth will not follow a simple linear progression; i.e., paper six may not be "better" than paper three.	Teachers should not expect students' products to be progressively "better." Only if students "play it safe" and essentially rewrite the same paper all semester will a clear progression be evident. Thus, pretest and post-test in-class essay results often are poor indicators of growth.
Especially when students attempt new endeavors, successive drafts of a particular paper are better indicators of growth than comparisons of completed products.	Teachers should look at drafts of particular papers as well as considering relative "difficulty level" of writing tasks.
Dramatic leaps in ability are linked to the strength of the writer's intentions for the piece. Intention releases tacit powers which in turn lead to mastery.	Teachers must work at leading students to find their own intentions.

Bibliography

For Those Who Would Know More

The studies that follow present a good perspective of present realities and future possibilities for both students and teachers of writing:

ELEMENTARY

Sometimes it's important for college teachers to know what 7-year-olds are capable of doing—given the right environment. If 7-year-olds can do it, there is hope for 20-year-olds, despite underpreparedness.

Calkins, Lucy M. "Andrea Learns to Make Writing Hard." *Language Arts*, 56 (1979), 569-576.

Graves, Donald. "What Children Show Us About Revision." *Language Arts*, 56 (1979), 312-319.

Graves, Donald. "A New Look at Writing Research." *Language Arts*, 57 (1980), 913-919.

SECONDARY

Most agree that these are seminal works in composing research:

Britton, James et al. *The Development of Writing Abilities*, 11-18. London: Macmillan, 1975.

Emig, Janet. *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders*. Urbana, Ill: NCTE, 1971.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

All include implications for teaching:

Peitzman, Faye. "The Composing Processes of Three College Freshmen: Focus on Revision." Diss. New York University 1981.

Perl, Sondra. "Five Writers Writing: The Composing Processes of Unskilled College Writers." Diss. New York University 1978. *DAI*, 39 (1979), 4788A. University Microfilms No. 78-24104.

Pianko, Sharon. "A Description of the Composing Processes of College Freshman Writers." *Research in the Teaching of English*, 13 (1979), 13 (1979), 5-22.

Sommers, Nancy. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers." *College Composition and Communication*, 31 (1980), 378-387.

Other references made in this essay

Perl, Sondra. "Understanding Composing." *College Composition and Communication*, 31 (1980), 363-369.

Schwartz, Mimi. "Six Journeys through the Writing Process." Diss. Rutgers University 1980. *DAI*, 41 (1981), 1450A. University Microfilms. No. 80-23624.

CHAPTER II

Teaching Methods for All Students

Introduction

In this chapter the members of the Exxon Seminar do not presume to showcase a set of revolutionary teaching methods that will scatter miraculous results among students of writing. Rather, the chapter has evolved from a careful search to discover which methods have been recently used in universities and colleges with reliable results. Among the numerous methods—old and new—the Seminar has chosen several that seemed remarkable in that they were successful and flexible. The Seminar members particularly valued flexibility because they wanted materials that could be adapted to all teaching and learning styles—from the most traditional to the most experimental. The successful teachers will be the ones who quickly sense which approaches have a good stylistic fit—and will use these creatively.

The methods presented in this chapter vary from individualized instruction to formal classroom projects. Both the burned out teacher, seeking to pump new blood into worn out methodology and the inexperienced teacher, feeling overwhelmed or insecure, can find in the following pages a wealth of ideas to stimulate students to find considerable joy in learning how to write well.

Jo An Simmons presents the Garrison method, a distinct and unique way of tutoring that saves the teacher wasted energy while helping students to focus on major errors they have been making and encouraging them to correct these errors immediately. Her views are reinforced by Stephen Montgomery who also takes the view that writing is a private act in which the student profits most by the teacher's timely intervention with instruction tailored to the writer's specific, individual problems. Montgomery suggests the tutorial method as ideal because here the teacher can create for each student a personalized course in writing. He painstakingly details procedures found enormously successful in his own writing center.

Jo Ray McCuen, profiting from signal research indicating that peer groups can promote excellence in writing, presents the Editorial Committee Method, a system in which small groups of students form a workshop to edit each other's writing. According to McCuen, this system infuses an electric excitement and sense of delightful accomplishment into the writing experiment. She claims that the results make both teachers and students justifiably proud of their progress.

Patricia Taylor demonstrates how students can practice the time-honored but abandoned art of stylistic imitation, that is, copying, simulating, and emulating models. Taylor believes that by imitating certain features of excellent writing, students learn to understand the interplay between words and ideas, thus gradually creating their own readable style.

Four techniques, almost lesson plans, are also included in this chapter. Frank O'Hare's technique, summarized here by Charles Donaldson, uses editing sheets and peer comments to have students improve their writing *before* handing it in, thus helping them to avoid punitive grades for work not representing their best effort. The remarkable side of O'Hare's system is that it motivates the student to revise until he has a "sure winner."

There is much ado about sentence-combining these days. The final scores are not in, but its devotees argue that sentence-combining, properly taught and integrated, increases fluency, promotes syntactic maturity and even improves reading ability. Jo Ray McCuen, drawing on three of the most popular books in the field, sums up the way a student progresses from sentence-combining to sentence-generation to sentence-evaluation.

Two excellent writing exercises are provided by Gary Colombo and Donald Heidt. Colombo, taking off on Richard Lanham's work, presents the Paramedic Method, a way of cleaning up and lightening prose when it has become larded and stiffened by a clumsy bureaucratic style. Donald Heidt presents a set of exercises structured to move the student from personal-experience writing to objective-analysis writing.

The Exxon Seminar is not trying to convert teachers to any one method presented nor does it secretly hope that teachers will abandon traditional methods to embrace novelty for the sake of novelty. Rather, we want to challenge teachers to look at new or alternative ways of teaching because we know that stagnation means the death of teaching.

Jo Ray McCuen

The One-to-One Method of Teaching Composition

JO AN SIMMONS

Picture a classroom of students writing. The teacher and a student, sitting side by side, are conferring intensely on the student's writing draft. Two or three tutors may be in the room holding similar theme conferences. While the other students are waiting for their conferences, they are writing, re-writing and revising works-in-progress. What you are seeing is the Garrison or One-to-One Method at work. This article will lay bare the assumptions and rationale of the method; it will explain the mechanics of the one-to-one conference and how to get started with method; and it will list its disadvantages and advantages. Much of what is described hereafter is adapted from Garrison's work.

Major Assumptions

Roger Garrison, who has devised the structured theme conference, approaches the teaching of writing as a craft and sees the student-teacher relationship as apprentice writer to editor. Several times a week the class meets as a workshop, and each time every student has a theme conference with his teacher. As in teaching a craft, the teacher is involved not just with the final product but with the skills and materials in its development. The skills of the writing craft have been analyzed and made into a system: a sequence of skills which lead one to the other and which culminate in a well-made piece of writing. Teacher and student confer on the writing at one or more stages of its development.

The primary assumption behind the method is that the best way to learn to write is by writing and rewriting. Roger Garrison thinks that the best use of class time, then, is not in class discussions, nor in lectures on writing, nor in analysis of someone else's writing, but in writing. Garrison believes that the student's confronting and solving a problem in his own writing is worth a thousand exercises in a handbook and that the student can best discover what he wants to say by writing a first draft.

Another important assumption is that the teacher's intervention in the early stages of the process of writing is master teaching. He insists that teaching is simply "helpful intervention in another's

learning activity." Instead of receiving a corrected theme, red-penciled with symbols indicating errors covering everything from faulty definition, inadequate development, and poor organization, to coherence, syntax, usage, punctuation, word choice, and spelling, the one-to-one student receives personal direction in one area of difficulty at a time. For example, if the ideas need sharper focus, the student works on that problem until it is corrected and then has a conference on the next skill. He does not feel overwhelmed by multiple errors, not knowing where to start. The necessary but inhibiting considerations of correctness appear only after an idea has been forged in rough. In other words, the refining process is held off until the idea has been presented in rough form.

Another major assumption is that the student learns best one-to-one, sitting at the teacher's side in a conference. According to Garrison, a formal writing class is an administrative convenience and a fiction: "The group or class has no writing problems; there are only individuals who have problems saying what they mean." When instruction on writing problems is parceled out in weekly discussions or chapter-by-chapter readings in a text, rather than in individual conferences, the instruction might be weeks behind or ahead of a particular student's problems. In one-to-one teaching, on the other hand, the teacher is aware of the individual student's pattern of difficulty and can prescribe specifically for that student.

Teacher response in a one-to-one setting, the last assumption discussed here, gives the student a sense of audience and moves him from writer-based prose to reader-based prose in anticipation of the teacher's questions and comments. The mere register of the fact that the teacher has "heard" what the writer is trying to say is important to those inexperienced in writing. A little encouragement persuades them to sustain writing, despite its loneliness. And when the teacher has difficulty "hearing" what the student is trying to say, this feedback is close to the situation, not at a week's remove when the final draft has already been graded. The remedial student in particular, who secretly fears that he will never be able to write, profits both intellectually and psychologically from the teacher's praise. The student's anxieties are relieved when the teacher deals with his writing problems tactfully and responds to his complete message before attacking or dissecting his vulnerable structure and ignorance of writing conventions.

The One-To-One Conference

The three to seven minute one-to-one conference is the heart of the Garrison method, delivering the individualized instruction and theme evaluation and creating a new relationship between teacher and student. The teacher, now an editor-helper, points out the student's strengths before his weaknesses. He finds something positive

to say—whether it's the vivid details, the wealth of details, the good story, the tensile suspense, the trim sentence, or the perfect word choice. Then, depending on the writing skill being looked at during the conference, the teacher can zero in on the difficulties the student is having with that skill and suggest solutions. The teacher gives specific directions, making the rewriting task clear and manageable. Themes go through several drafts before being accepted.

The conference is structured by a sequence of skill objectives for each stage of a paper's development, from prewriting to final draft. Garrison breaks down the writing process into discrete stages, each demanding discrete skills. At the prewriting stage, the writer needs the skill of listing ideas and accumulating specific details; next, the writer needs selection skills in choosing the best ideas and details and in seeing patterns which lead to formulating a thesis or controlling viewpoint. Then the writer needs planning skills in organizing his ideas. After the construction of a rough draft, the writer needs revision skills (for correctness and clarity). Finally, he needs polishing skills to find the exact sentence and words to illumine his thoughts.

This skill sequence provides a blueprint for the conference, which can be held at each stage. The conference objectives below guide the teacher and the student in discussing the paper:

1. Having enough concrete, specific information.
2. Having a central idea, or, in freshman English, a thesis.
3. Having an organizational plan which shapes the parts—a clear beginning, middle and end.
4. Having sentences which are sound in grammar, dynamic in form, and accurate in punctuation.
5. Having word choices which are effective and spelled correctly.

One objective is looked at per theme conference. The student works on each skill in order. For instance, the student who still has nothing definite to say, and who has no clear thesis, receives direction in thinking through his ideas; he does not proceed to organize what is still a muddle. Similarly, the student who is having difficulty presenting his ideas coherently gets help in finding a straight-arrow presentation; he does not work on sentence revision until his theme has coherence. At the beginning of the semester, the teacher may confer with a student at each stage in a paper's production. Soon, however, the teacher has some students who need to confer only with first drafts and revised drafts. With others, a conference at the idea stage helps. Students who write acceptable but dull prose profit from help at the prewriting stage, while those who write lively, semi-literate papers profit from conferences at the revision stage. The opportunity for the teacher to intervene at the appropriate stages saves the teacher from reading and the student from writing a disastrous paper. It acquaints the teacher with the individual student's particular problem and allows on-the-spot instruction.

Prewriting

Prewriting is the first stage of composing; it means creating a list of specifics on the subject chosen, assembling what Garrison calls the raw material from which writing is composed—the "facts, feelings, examples, and images that the writer has dug, pulled, created, inferred, and accumulated from his subject." At this stage, the teacher praises whatever clear-headed details and facts the student already has and elicits more by asking for examples and toppling the vague idea from its perch high on the abstraction ladder. The teacher leads the student to clarify his ideas and to see what he has left unsaid. A conference on a descriptive paper at this stage might include questions that evoke texture, color, sound, taste, and smell, while a conference on a narrative essay would include getting all the details of what happened.

Focus

Organizing the specifics is the skill checked at the next stage of composition. Here, teachers help students find the answers to Garrison's questions concerning their fact list: "What do these facts say? What do I want to say about these facts? Do these facts add up to anything? Are there several generalizations which will cover or explain these facts? In what logical framework, in short, am I going to organize these facts?" The answers to these questions lead, of course, to patterns of facts, to selection of facts, to thesis, to topic sentence, or to controlling viewpoint. The controlling viewpoint keeps all of the specifics consistent with the purpose and keeps the tone consistent with the audience. The teacher looks for thesis and topic sentence in expository writing and for controlling viewpoint in descriptive or narrative writing.

Organization

Next, the teacher reads the student's rough draft for organization. In an expository theme, the teacher and student consider where the student put his thesis, whether he kept it out front as he moved from point to point, what his strongest point was, where he put it, and how he began and ended. In a narrative theme, the teacher and student might confer on the time sequence, on how close to the main action the writer should begin, or the desirability of a flashback. In a descriptive paper, the type of spatial organization of details and the relationship of the details to the dominant impression might be the concerns.

Correctness

Correctness is the skill objective of the next stage. Garrison believes that this is the ideal time to teach grammar—in the setting of

the student's own writing problems, when response to his paper has motivated him to care about the fine points of syntax and punctuation. When the teacher asks the student to read aloud his run-on sentence, the student hears his voice drop at the place where he needs punctuation. The teacher shows him how to correct this error and sends him to correct any other run-ons, perhaps giving him a handout on run-ons or directing him to a tape, to the page in his handbook, or to his tutor for further help. The teacher assists the student in recognizing his other errors—fragments, faulty agreement, missing word endings, shifts in person and mood. Mini-lessons are given in this conference. Helped by the teacher, the student learns the principles of good writing primarily from wrestling with his own sentences, rather than from handbook exercises or class discussion. He learns parallelism when he attempts a series. He discovers that the semicolon may emphasize a contrast between two clauses, and that the colon will sound the trumpet to the facts that follow. He learns how to unburden the sentence that stumbles under the weight of too many ideas.

Word Choice

Effective word choices and correct spelling are the objectives of the final stage in writing. In a final conference the teacher points out the student's apt word choices, what Garrison calls the "vivid little phrase in the pudding prose." He helps the student replace the lumpish word with one of diamond-cut exactness and the gray term with a colorful expression. The student corrects his misspelled words and keeps a list of words that repeatedly cause him trouble.

Evaluation/Records

The accomplishment of skill objectives can be recorded in various ways. Some teachers have students keep their work in a folder with a chart which is checked off or initialed by the teacher or tutors at the appropriate stages. (See sample chart on p. 28.) Others use a stamp, illustrated below, which can be checked or initialed by the teacher or tutors when the objective has been met.

Content _____
Thesis _____
Organization _____
Sentences _____
Word choice _____

Sample Theme

In practice, few themes need five conferences. I saw the paper below as a first draft and accepted it after a second conference. If this paper were brought to you, what good points could you mention

What do you see as the most immediate problem to be dealt with in this conference? What do you see as secondary problems to be solved at a later conference? What suggestions would you make?

Theme to Persuade

As a former owner of an American-manufactured automobile I would encourage anyone interested in buying an automobile to purchase one from a foreign auto dealer. During my long ownership I have made three discoveries that I think would sway any money-conscious person away from buying an American car into buying a foreign car. Foreign manufacturing companies such as Toyota and Datsun produce autos that are very economical. They use up to forty percent less fuel than American cars do. And during a time when gasoline is so expensive that is a very reassuring fact. Unfortunately the standard parts used in American autos are not as durable as those on foreign autos. Which means that American car owners are constantly replacing worn-out parts; a costly and laborious task.

There is also a great difference in the total cost of foreign and American cars. Let's take for instance the Datsun 1981 B 210 and the 1981 Ford Mustang. The performance of each car is about the same, but the Datsun B 210 which is foreign costs two thousand, five hundred dollars less than a Ford Mustang, an American product.

Another factor that is very important in our society is beauty. By far foreign cars are much more attractive than American cars. It is amazing how much influenced the exterior has over an individual. But since it is possible to get quality and beauty from a foreign car, judging an automobile only by its beauty is not such a fault.

I am now the proud owner of a foreign manufactured 1981 Toyota Corolla. As an unemployed student, it definately meets my economic needs and as one who appreciates beauty, it's the apple of my eye.

I think most composition teachers would agree that this theme has a definite thesis, a clear direction and several good facts. The most immediate problem is the thin development; there are not enough supporting points to persuade the reader that foreign cars are preferable. The fourth paragraph's discussion of "beauty" is too high on the abstraction ladder. The secondary problems are the fragments, a shift, misspelling, wrong word, and missing commas after introductory phrases and clauses. (Some of these problems disappeared after the student developed her ideas.) These are the revision directions I gave the student: "To develop your ideas further: 1. Combine paragraphs one and two since they both deal with the economic advantages of foreign cars. 2. Write a paragraph on the performance advantage of foreign cars, and 3. Define what you mean by beauty; decide whether you are talking about paint, colors, shape, proportion, interiors, exteriors." I suggested that she might want to contrast her American car and her foreign car on each of these points.

Getting Started

One-to-one conferences do not usually begin until the third week of the semester. During the early weeks, the teacher establishes the

groundwork for the class: course objectives, grading and attendance rules, how the one-to-one workshop functions, and what is expected of students. Each student fills out a questionnaire which furnishes the teacher with information about his major, his future occupation, interests and hobbies, and his experiences in such areas as child-raising, work, and the military. From this information, teachers can devise individualized diagnostic assignments, paragraphs that will disclose the pattern of each student's strengths and weaknesses. (For examples: explain three things you learned from your job as a bartender. Argue specifically for things that attract you to the field of accounting. Describe two or three personal qualities you think a dental assistant should have.) The teacher notes the patterns of strengths and weaknesses on a record sheet for each student and prescribes writing tasks for each student's particular needs. Garrison recommends deriving these topics from the student's immediate experiences or a list of the student's genuine interests. These early assignments are often descriptive or factual summary paragraphs; from these the student moves on to longer or more sophisticated writing at his own pace.

Many teachers do not carry out the individuation to the degree that Garrison does. After the initial diagnostic assignments and a few personal experience themes, my freshman English students all have the same sequence of assignments, whether it's a reaction paper to Hannah Arendt's ideas on work and labor, a book report on *Walden*, a theme to persuade, or a comparison-contrast theme. Of course, the content of these themes is individual and the due dates have some flexibility according to the number of re-writes needed. My remedial composition students do a similar sequence, which includes a description, a case history, a childhood remembrance, and an expository paragraph. In fact, Garrison encourages adapting his methods to the individual teacher's own needs and temperament in relation to diversity and structure. Excellent sources for individual and class writing tasks are listed at the end of this article.

How many days a week a class meets as a one-to-one workshop and how many days it meets for general sessions depend on whether there are course requirements in addition to composition. On Los Angeles Community College campuses, freshman English classes hold general sessions once a week to discuss assigned readings, develop critical reading skills, and learn the units on logic, semantics, and library research. General sessions are also held in the early weeks for students to learn what a thesis is, how to discover it in their reading, and how to create it in their writing. They learn how to differentiate the specific from the general, how to support their ideas with specific points, and how to organize these ideas. A Tuesday-Thursday class would typically split the week between the one-to-one workshop and the general session, while a Monday-Wednesday-Friday class would meet for conferences twice a week and for a general session once a week.

Determining the order in which students are seen for conferences also varies. Some teachers use Garrison's take-a-number method, as used in ice cream parlors and meat markets, while others have the students write their names on the board and see them in that order. Teachers fortunate enough to have tutors can divide their roll, three by five cards, or list, giving each tutor or teacher ten to twelve students to see each hour.

Disadvantages of the Garrison Method

One problem of the Garrison method is that grades are rather high. Because the students have had professional help, the end product is better than the student's solo efforts. Teachers also tend to value themes that have some of their own imprint on them. Garrison gets around this problem by avoiding grading as many themes as possible, by using a sliding grading scale which takes in both quality and quantity of themes, and by grading only two or three themes selected by the student. Some teachers include one or two themes written without any help to balance the edited themes. When reading and logic quizzes are also a part of the final grade, there is no danger of grade inflation.

While the method cuts down or eliminates themes read by the teacher at home, conferencing is hard, intense work. Getting to each student's paper, getting quickly in and out of that paper, learning to focus on its strength and its most immediate problem, learning to engage students in the solution of that problem and giving them specific directions—all in a few minutes—are skills that take some time to develop. The first semester is often difficult. Teachers may not feel quite in control of the situation, even though the students assure them that they are learning more than they ever have before. It's wise at the beginning to take small bites—maybe only one hour of conferencing a week, or only a few individualized assignments. But every English teacher can learn speedy conferencing. Although one-to-one instruction calls for a radical change, it is such a good change that rarely does a teacher go back to the old ways.

Advantages/Glorious Results

In 1978, the Los Angeles Commmunity College District tested the effectiveness of the One-to-One Method in both freshman English and remedial composition classes. Four campuses—Los Angeles City College, East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles Trade Tech, and Valley College participated. These campuses provided very different populations—urban/suburban; technical/university-transfer; affluent/poor; high and low minority and ESL populations. A transfer and a remedial level class at each campus was matched with a control class. Each class had thirty students, and each one-to-one class had three student tutors to assist the teacher.

An essay question was written by every student both in February and in May. These essays were blind-graded by a group of independent evaluators who did not know if they were reading a pretest or post-test essay or an essay written by a Garrison or non-Garrison method student. Each essay was rated on a scale of one to six and received two readings, making twelve the highest possible score. The score of the first reader was masked from the second. Analysis of the data produced these findings:

1. Garrison method students showed significantly greater gains between pretest and post-test than did non-Garrison students. This was true on both levels and on all campuses.
2. Remedial classes gained significantly more than freshman English classes between pretest and posttest. Other data showed that Garrison method classes retained more students, and teacher and student questionnaires showed high student and teacher morale in one-to-one classes. One result of this favorable evaluation was that during the 1980–81 school year, the Los Angeles Community College District funded one-to-one instruction for 6,000 students on its nine campuses.

Picture yourself teaching composition one-to-one, doing an effective job, having few papers to take home, enjoying the role of editor-helper, knowing your student's particular writing problems and being a part of their solution. If you like this picture and want to fill in the foreground and background, here are additional helps:

Boretz, Marianne. *Handbook for One-to-One Teachers*, 1981. Copies available by writing to
Division of Educational Services
Los Angeles Community Colleges
617 West Seventh Street
Los Angeles, California 90017

Dawe, Charles and Edward Dornan. *One to One: Resources for Conference-Centered Writing*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1981. (Order the instructor's edition which contains an instructor's manual.)

Garrison, Roger. *How a Writer Works*. New York: Harper and Row, 1981. (Order the instructor's manual separately.) "One to One: Tutorial Instruction in Freshman Composition," *New Directions for Community Colleges*, (Spring 1974), 55–82.

Simmons, Jo An McGuire. *Testing the Effectiveness of the One-to-One Method of Teaching Composition*, April 1979. Copies available by writing to
Division of Educational Services
Los Angeles Community Colleges
617 West Seventh Street
Los Angeles, California 90017

Writing As Process—Sample Prewriting, First Draft, and Final Draft

Assignment—Choose A or B; write no more than one paragraph, writing on every other line,

A. Something that has thoroughly delighted you
B. Something that has frustrated you beyond tolerance.

Composition Progress Report

Class number

Name

Project # & Topic	Fact List	Thesis Sentence	Rough Draft	First Revision	Second Revision	Final Draft	Remarks
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							

1. Prewriting

Thoroughly delighted—have my serve work, not only in the right court but an ace which sails (smashes) by my opponent, impossible to return
sound snap wrist at peak of serve and let go (fling) and ace
feel slow-to-fast momentum, dropping racquet slowly
crisp connect
solid forcing to base line
square perfect connection—forehand drive—cleanly spinning over net to baseline
solid timing, oneness
tingling feeling sun advancing across the court, pine smell
spin Anticipation—in place, waiting for serve
soar hiss of can vacuum—violated—smell of new, fuzzy yellow-white balls at prime bounce
metal racquet
Ping—tuneful—thwunck, thwack—perfect execution—something like ballet
Smashing Automatic reflexes returning a shot—no time to think
Low shot at opponent's feet

2. First Draft

It starts with a hiss of rubberized air as the Dunlap can of tennis balls is opened and out pop the new fuzzy balls at prime bounce. It builds during the warm-up when free, loose drives skid spin precisely to the baseline. The sun is advancing across the court, there is a mild Eucalyptus tincture in the air, and the birds are tuneful, but soon all awareness of these things will retreat as the game begins. Then attention is focused on the ball shooting-flying back and forth across the net. Thwhack, Thwhack on racquet and court. The blood is atingle and the muscles taut as I wait to return the service in the left court. Ah, to meet the dreaded backhand with a solid, lifting, decisive return. Even better is a perfect connection with the forehand drive—that connection that feels solid, and racquet and arm and ball become one. It even sounds squarely right. The ultimate, of course is to wind up to the top of the serve with a final wrist snap and perceive the spinning ball smash past my dumbfounded opponent. Ah ace! Ah Joy!

3. Final Draft

Final version with suggested revisions from teacher:

A Thoroughly Delightful Moment

It starts for me with a hiss of compressed air as the Dunlop can pops open and out come the fuzzy, new balls at prime bounce. It

builds during the warm-up when free, loose drives spin precisely to the baseline. The sun advances across the court, and there is a mild eucalyptus tincture in the air, and the birds are tuneful, but soon all awareness of these things will retreat as the game begins. Then attention is focused on the ball shooting-flying back and forth across the net. Thwhack, thwhack on racquet and court. The blood is atingle decisive return. Even better is a perfect connection with a forehand—a connection that feels solid as racquet, arm, and ball become one. It even sounds squarely right. The ultimate, of course, is to wind up to the top of the serve with a final snap of the wrist and perceive the spinning ball smash past my dumbfounded opponent. An ace! Ah, joy!

The Tutorial Point of View

STEPHEN MONTGOMERY

Tutorial instruction takes place when a student sits down with an expert who helps him with his writing in a one-to-one apprenticeship. This method of learning can take place in a classroom, in the instructor's office, or in a writing center under the supervision of trained tutors. For the sake of simplicity, this chapter assumes that the setting for tutorial learning is a writing center.

A fundamental assumption of teaching through the tutorial conference is that the student of writing profits most from the tutor's timely intervention with instruction addressed to the individual's unique problem. As the student and the tutor discuss the problem, the process of instruction in writing becomes essentially individualized, and when the tutor suggests changes for improvement, he or she creates a personalized "course" in writing for the student.

Three concerns—motivation to learn, understanding principles, and developing fluency—are the aims of remedial tutorial instruction.

Motivating the Student

Motivating the student to learn begins in the communications with the student. In their book entitled *Contact: The First Four Minutes*, Leonard and Natalie Zunin show that four minutes is "the average time during which strangers in a social situation interact before they decide to part or continue their encounter." The Zunins believe that being aware of four elements will increase the positive effects of those first four minutes. "First, it is important to convey a certain degree of self-confidence. Second, finding appropriate ways to tune in to the feelings of others, or being creative, positively enhances the encounter. Third, caring is demonstrated by listening intently, giving total attention. The last element, consideration, is being sensitive and aware that you are relating to a person who is unique and who has fears, insecurities, and hopes."

Because tutorials establish a direct and intimate communication, all verbal and nonverbal behaviors are consequential to a degree not present in a lecture/group discussion. In fact, gestures, voices, and looks are interpreted personally. The teacher's most casual frown may be interpreted as deep displeasure, and his slightly grumpy tone may be translated into terrible fury. A teacher must therefore be aware of

the fact that often feelings engendered by the conference strongly affect the student's motivation. A teacher must realize certain dangers. For instance, the alertness, good humor, earnestness, and self-surrender that characterize the encounter in the tutorials may exhaust the teacher. At times only an act of will can keep the voice steady; fatigue conspiring with annoyance, irritation, or sometimes anger change its tone and pitch. Not only the voice betrays the teacher, however. His stance in the conference changes perceptibly. Paradoxically, he stops questioning the student and begins to talk more. He forgets to reinforce the student's efforts. He becomes less concerned with the student's comprehension and more concerned with getting the errors out of the paper. His disapproval becomes visible as the conference becomes mechanical.

The irony of the changes is that the more directive the teacher becomes, the less likely it is that the unmotivated student will feel any sense of being in control over his own writing. He will tend to sit and absorb the teacher's corrections or suggestions without really translating them into his own writing. A typical statement of the unmotivated student is, "The teacher gave me an F. I can't write." A sense of helplessness engulfs him. Because researchers have found that a greater shift toward a sense of internal control takes place when students receive the right kind of individualized instruction, a teacher has the additional responsibility of seeing that verbal and non-verbal behaviors do not sabotage the conference.

Understanding Principles

The teacher must encourage learning that stresses the principle underlying a rule. The check list on pages 40–41 is suggested as a concise guide to rhetorical and conventional concerns. It is a basic evaluation form enumerating the possible weaknesses in a composition. The rhetorical skills are organized classically under *invention, arrangement,* and *style*. The conventional skills outlined are *grammatical, mechanical,* and *vocabulary*. While the check list is useful for editing and proofreading, it is most useful when it elicits discussions of the principles that found the skills. For example, if the composition is disorganized, the teacher should be concerned not only with pointing out the fault but also with instilling a principle that will help to mend the fault, namely pointing out logical, spatial, or chronological ordering. Similarly, if the composition has no topic statement, the writer should be given a brief explanation of generalizing, inducing, or inferring. Without principles, the student will never feel in control of his writing. Language and composing will remain a befuddling jungle.

Developing Fluency

Fluency in writing is difficult to achieve. For the most part, problems in fluency are the result of making a poor choice in the act

of writing or of not making a choice at all. The most effective teacher involves himself in the student's activity of choosing.

Tutorial instruction is particularly useful in helping the student to make the right choices. Unlike conventional classroom teaching that is either before or after the fact of writing, tutorial teaching places the teacher with the student and gives him immediate access to the writer's strengths and weaknesses in making appropriate choices. He can also explain at length. For example, the error in the following sentence is so complex that efforts to explain the error by marking the essay would lead either to writing more than the student had written or to resorting to "K," "Awk.," or Syntax," symbols that indicate not *why* the error was made but *what descriptive class* it belongs to:

> *Equally important is the technique called computerized axial tomography (CAT), of which I plan to discuss in more detail, has proved capable of revealing abnormalities that previously escaped detection.*

Instructing the student to "revise this sentence" is as ineffective as the editing marks. The teacher must involve himself in the activity of choosing the correct syntactical combination.

Because of the intimate relationship between the teacher and the student, the following process for tutoring may help the teacher to be more sensitive to his role in motivating the student to learn, to understand principles, and to become fluent. After all, what is more civilizing than discussing with a person what he has read or written?

A Tutorial Process

Tutorial instruction is not a matter of telling the student what to do with his writing, only rarely a case of showing what to do, and never an instance of doing it for the student. It is, instead, instruction in problem-solving. For instance, if the instructor wants a paragraph 150 words long and the student has written 300 words, then the writer has a problem, readily identifiable and easily understood. He must cut 150 words. (Unfortunately, the longer work is sometimes better than the shorter one, an observation not so curious if we consider that the students' longer works often are motivated by strong feelings.) But saying "You must edit this paragraph" is poor advice. What will the student take out? How will he repair the incoherence that is bound to result from cutting? The effective teacher clarifies the problem if the student is unable to and then asks the student how he is going to solve it. Simply put, the teacher says, "Here is your problem. What are you going to do about it?" He listens carefully to the student's solution, offering some corrective advice if necessary, and then reads the solution. *Listening* to the student's oral reporting of what he intends to do is more important than reading what he has done, so far as tutorial instruction is concerned. It is in the listening

stage that the tutor can be of greatest assistance to the student, for in that act, the tutor actually guides the student's composing.

The tutorial process is determined by the state of the student's writing. And the state is shaped by the instructor's assignment, the stipulation of the instructor's general requirements, and the student's reason for being in a writing class or writing center. If he is a drop-in student, the work is probably fairly complete when he brings it in. If he is assigned through an English class, then the tutor may work with him from the inception of the essay, reading topic sentences and outlines as a first step in responding to a particular assignment. Or the tutor may read rough drafts only. Because of the various states, the number and order of the steps in the tutorial process may change, but the content of each step is unaltered, as represented in the diagram on p. 35.

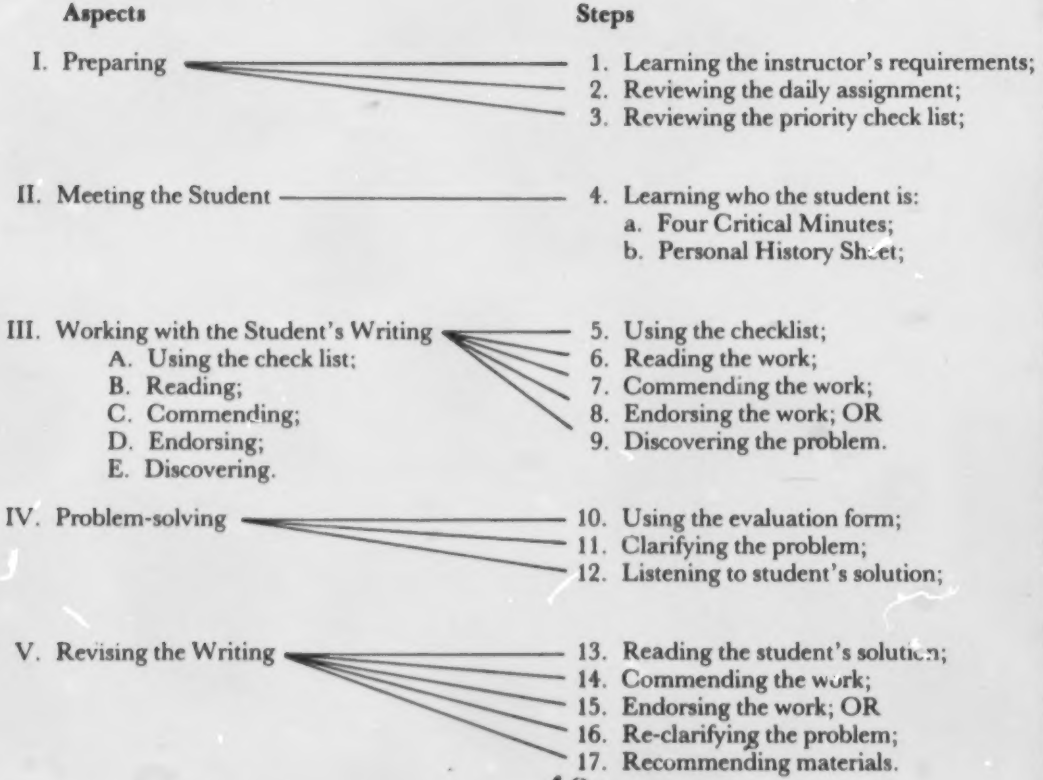
Special Hints for Tutors in Writing Centers

1. Learning the Instructor's Requirements

With specifications varying from instructor to instructor, tutors working in a writing center find wide disagreement between what is acceptable to each instructor. Formats differ: some instructors want the heading with student's name, section, group, and date at the top right; others at the top left. Some want it on the first page only; others on each page. Structures differ: some want an introductory sentence in the paragraph; others do not. Some want a conclusion, some do not. It is rarely safe to assume that what is allowable by one instructor is allowable by another. Before meeting with a student in a tutorial relationship, be sure that you know the requirements exactly. Nothing will undermine the student's confidence in you more quickly than discovering that you do not know what you are talking about. What is more important, the instructor will reject the writing if it does not conform to his requirements. Ultimately, of course, the student is responsible for making his writing acceptable. Tutors are responsible for seeing that he understands the instructor's requirements.

2. Reviewing the Priority Checklist

In most cases, tutors work with essays from inception to completion. Sometimes they are asked to check only outlines and topic statements. Regardless of the completeness of the process, the checklist on p. 40 reflects priorities in tutoring the student. To state the matter briefly, tutors must concern themselves with rhetorical aspects before they turn to grammatical and mechanical aspects. Limp writing is undeveloped, unfocused, disorganized writing; correct conventions rarely give it vigor.


Aspects
Steps
I. Preparing
1. Learning the instructor's requirements;
2. Reviewing the daily assignment;
3. Reviewing the priority check list;
II. Meeting the Student
4. Learning who the student is:
a. Four Critical Minutes;
b. Personal History Sheet;
III. Working with the Student's Writing
A. Using the check list;
B. Reading;
C. Commending;
D. Endorsing;
E. Discovering.
5. Using the checklist;
6. Reading the work;
7. Commending the work;
8. Endorsing the work; OR
9. Discovering the problem.
IV. Problem-solving
10. Using the evaluation form;
11. Clarifying the problem;
12. Listening to student's solution;
V. Revising the Writing
13. Reading the student's solution;
14. Commending the work;
15. Endorsing the work; OR
16. Re-clarifying the problem;
17. Recommending materials.

3. Learning Who the Student Is

Most students do not have a natural bent that drives them to learn. For them, being a formal student is an unfamiliar activity. Unused to the part, they frequently disregard their responsibilities, unaware that they have any. One of the tutor's more significant acts is helping the person assume the role of student by encouraging him to take responsibility for his own education. The task is difficult because typically students in basic writing classes draw highly distorted portraits of themselves. Regardless of the labels used for such classes, to the student they are all euphemisms for "bonehead," telling him that he did not pass the muster. Writing in *Innovation Abstracts* about the initial encounter with high-risk students, Albert Goodman of the University of Texas says that, for them, "managing the first four minutes can be quite difficult. Feeling insecure and out of place in the teacher's world, they are anxiously trying to sense whether the teacher regards them as negatively as they regard themselves."

Meeting the student is so central to teaching him, that the activity is here treated as a separate aspect of the tutoring process.

When you function as a tutor, you must strongly direct the initial meeting. This does not mean that you must control it, dominate it; it means that you must confidently guide the meeting so that the student learns something about the tutor and the tutor learns something about the student. Gaining knowledge of each other is a primary goal of that first meeting. The tutor must be as creative as possible in exchanging information. For instance, he may swap his autobiography for the student's personal history sheet. He may elicit conversation. The student should be encouraged to talk about his writing if he is reticent to disclose much about himself. The tutor should speak directly to the student, not to the table or the essay, and he should listen with great care to what the student is saying. A tutor must not patronize the student and most of all, he must not posture. A student will never get interested in writing if he senses that the tutor is uninterested in his involvement. The tutor should keep in mind that he is trying to develop confidence and independence as well as skill and craft.

4. Using the Checklist

When a student hands you, as his tutor, a paper, whether complete or in outline form, and says, "Read this for me," he has made you responsible for everything in the essay, everything from its conception to the apostrophe in *who's*. In turn, you must make the student responsible for the essay by asking him what he wants you to check it for. Ask him to tell you what he thinks the problem is by referring him to the checklist. The idea of this step is fostering

independent, self motivating, critical writers. Once the student has isolated what he wants you to read the paper for, then read it. If he has no notion of what may be wrong with the essay, read it for him anyway.

5. Reading the Work

Once the student has surrendered his work to the tutor, many complex reactions set in. Undoubtedly, the act of handing over his work evokes memories and historical feelings. Since other acts of surrender do, why should this one be exempt? He may recall parent-child hostilities, transferring them to the tutor. He will certainly remember derisive encounters with other English teachers. His first reaction may even be to imitate those authority figures and to deride his own writing. To avoid this type of transference, a tutor can do several things. You can have the student sit beside you as you read, the paper on the table between the two of you. Never stand while the student sits; you tower over him. Never sit while the student stands; that position is even more authoritarian. And do not sit on opposite sides of the table as you read; that, too, is an adversary position. Each case separates you from the student and puts you in charge of his writing, a responsibility that you want to avoid. Create privacy for the student. Be aware of his reactions as you read the essay. Some students tremble, some perspire, some laugh, some feign a complete lack of concern, detaching themselves from their own work so successfully that they actually do not hear what you have to say. Still others become so protective of their feelings, vis a vis the writing, that they talk nervously to you as you read. Until the student trusts you, he will defend his writing even while you read it. Finally, read the entire essay before commenting. The first time through should be a quick scan for a general impression of the writing. The second reading should be a perusal. As you read, keep the evaluation form in mind. You are working from a list of priorities, a list that gives you an order for discussing problems in the writing.

6. Commending the Work

Once you have read the essay, commend it. Do not point out a single error or problem until you have praised something that the student has done right, some strength he has revealed in his writing. You may even have to step back from the writing and discuss strengths in handling that particular mode of discourse, especially if he has not handled the specific assignment very well. Many basic writers exhibit at least two of the symptoms of the battered individual; they are suspicious of and sometimes hostile to teachers, and they are almost always convinced that their writing is worthless. Commendation

can quickly change those attitudes. Occasionally you will find a composition that is completely unpraiseworthy. In those cases be honest with the writer without discouraging him.

7. Endorsing the Work

If the essay needs no revising, editing, or proofreading, endorse it by initialing the work. But do not leave it at that. Tell the student *why the essay is successful*. Be specific in the telling. He can surely learn from his success as well as his failure.

8. Discovering the Problem

The next two aspects, problem-solving and revising the writing, show us how a student learns and thinks. It is in these two activities that the basic writer succeeds or fails, for if he cannot recognize the problem that he has created in his own writing, he is dependent on others. It stands to reason that if a student can recognize and solve a problem, he will be well on his way to competency. Problem-solving, then, is at the heart of tutorial instruction because it is the heart of thinking.

Of course, problem-solving based on trial-and-error is distinct from that based on cognitive reorganization. According to Dewey's logical concept, problem-solving begins in a "felt difficulty," followed by locating and defining the problem and suggesting a solution. In other words, writers may first have a general sense that "something is wrong." The second step is finding the particular problem; the third is solving it. There is a difference, then, between problem-finding and problem-solving.

Basic writers rarely envisage problems for solution. They rely strongly on intuition in conceiving ideas, and they experience "felt difficulties" but are unable to locate and define the problem. Even when a tutor presents the problem to them, conventional comma errors, say, they will attempt to solve the problem by trial-and-error, removing all commas from the writing and erroneously replacing them, rather than solving the problem by cognitive reorganization; that is, learning why commas are placed where they are placed. Because students solve by trial-and-error, they return to the tutor after each minor change for approval. Unable to envisage a problem, unprepared for the cognitive demands of solving the problem, the basic writer becomes competent and fluent very slowly.

In his *Toward a Theory of Instruction*, Jerome Bruner is concerned with the predisposition to explore alternatives, maintaining that learning and problem-solving depend upon the student's willingness to explore alternatives. Search behavior, he says, is regulated by "activation, maintenance, and direction." In other words, "it requires something to get it started, something to keep it going, and

something to keep it from being random." Some level of uncertainty will get it started, curiosity being a response to uncertainty and ambiguity. Routine tasks will provoke little exploration, and those that are too uncertain may arouse anxiety and confusion. Keeping it going requires that the benefits from exploring alternatives exceed the risks. Learning from a teacher should be less dangerous and risky or painful than learning on one's own. That is, the consequences of error should be rendered less grave under instruction. (Frequently, the consequences are more grave.) Finally, keeping the search from being random is a matter of telling the student what the goal is and where his actions stand with respect to it.

9. Using the Evaluation Forms

Having read the student's essay, commended it, and discovered problems in several aspects, you then use the evaluation forms with the student. To illustrate, let us say that he has a problem in content, grammar and mechanics. Circle those headings on the evaluation forms and tell him that he needs to work on those three aspects to improve the writing and to make it acceptable. *But work with one problem at a time, always in the order given on the forms.* Mark nothing on the essay. Ask the student to read the descriptions on the form under content and to read his essay and try to isolate the problem.

10. Clarifying the Problem

Continuing with the illustration let us say that the student has a problem with B4, (see p. 41) introducing the composition, but he cannot isolate it. Clarify the problem by showing him why B1, B2, and B3 are not problems in the essay.

11. Listening To Student's Solution

Now have the student tell you how he will solve the problem, what he will do in re-writing the essay. At this point, you can keep his search from being random and can make the consequences of error less painful. Moreover, the conversation may reveal why the student made the error as he tells how he perceives it.

12. Reading the Student's Revision
13. Commending the Work
14. Endorsing the Work
15. Re-clarifying the Problem
17. Recommending Materials

After reading the student's revision, you again commend the effort, then endorse it or re-clarify the problem if the revision is

unsuccessful. Now you assign materials to the student if you believe that he needs practice in the particular area that is giving him trouble. In the event that you endorse the revision, you then go to the next problem on his evaluation forms, in this case grammar. Specify the problem area by checking it on the sheet and by explaining the grammatical or mechanical fault. Then ask the student if he can locate that error in his essay.

Conclusion

Worse than ignoring the procedures listed above is being mechanical in the process of using them. The important actions in working with students in the writing center are as follows:

1. Knowing the instructor's requirements and assignments.
2. Teaching with priorities.
3. Understanding the person's role as a student.
4. Allowing the person to be responsible for his own writing.
5. Encouraging independence by showing the student what strengths he has as a writer.
6. Setting up instruction as an exercise in problem-solving.
7. Assigning highly purposive writing activities to develop skills in composing.

Checklist

Name _____

Assignment _____

I. RHETORICAL SKILLS

____ A. *Invention:* Finding a subject, restricting the subject, and supporting the subject.

1. *Prewriting.*
   a. The subject of the composition is unclear.
   b. The writer does not have a specific audience in mind.
2. *Content.*
   a. The composition is unfocused because it lacks a topic that includes a restricted subject and a controlling idea about the restricted subject.
   b. The composition has a topic statement but remains unfocused because the topic statement
      (1) has an unrestricted subject
      (2) lacks a controlling idea
      (3) has a controlling idea that is too broad, is abstract, or is hazy.
   c. The composition is undeveloped because its topic statement is too narrow; it is a statement of fact instead of a statement of opinion.

d. The composition in undeveloped because the writer gives no:
   (1) facts
   (2) details
   (3) specific reasons
   (4) examples
   (5) illustrations

____ B. *Arrangement:* A convincing and pleasing presentation of the evidence.
   1. The composition is disunified by irrelevant material.
   2. The composition is disordered because it does not use logical, chronological, or spatial order.
   3. The composition is incoherent because it lacks sufficient transitions.
   4. The composition has no introductory statement.
   5. The composition has no sense of closure.

____ C. *Style:* Beauty of expression—choosing the words, framing the sentences, pleasing the audience.
   1. Diction: The words are inaptly and inaccurately chosen.
   2. The sentences lack variety and forcefulness.
   3. The tone is inappropriate or inconsistent.

II. GRAMMATICAL SKILLS

____ A. Lack of agreement.
   1. subject-verb
   2. pronoun and antecedent

____ B. Verbs.
   1. endings
   2. tense

____ C. Sentence fragments
____ D. Run-on sentences
____ E. Dangling modifiers
____ F. Misplaced modifiers
____ G. Shifts in tense
____ H. Shifts in person of pronoun
____ I.
____ J.
____ K.

III. MECHANICAL SKILLS

____ A. Capital letters.
____ B. Misspellings
____ C. Punctuation:
   1. comma
   2. quotation marks
   3. apostrophe
   4. semicolon
   5. colon
   6. hyphen
   7. dash

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____ D. Abbreviations
____ E. Numbers

IV. VOCABULARY SKILLS
____ A. Restricted vocabulary
____ B. Second language vocabulary
____ C. Slang
____ D. Cliches
____ E. Confused words

The Editorial Committee

JO RAY McCUEN

Basic Assumptions On Which The System Is Based

1. Writing is a self-taught skill. From the start, writing is an original task. Unlike dancers, painters, pianists, or other artists, the writer does not usually learn by exact, conscious imitation (though that is a viable method, too. See p. 51). Even a beginning writer creates a new script out of the vocabulary and syntax he has acquired by living. No one dictates to him; he invents his particular expressions. The plain truth is that writing is learned by writing and rewriting; there is no other way. It is a craft learned on one's own, largely by hit and miss. One must write, then revise; write again, then revise some more—until one has assembled and polished one's writing as a gem cutter hones and polishes his stone to a fiery brilliance or soft luster. The complete process is known as editing.

2. Editing in peer groups alleviates some of the loneliness and insecurity of writing by providing the writer with some direct information about how his writing has affected an audience. The group dynamic infuses the writing task with excitement and motivation not found in an empty room at home or in a classroom full of students working independently.

3. The first draft will show *no improvement* in writing. It is in revising that one's writing improves. The revising process performs the crucial task of thinking through an essay. As Bacon said, "Writing maketh an exact man." Well, revising maketh an even more exact man. As a writer revises his work, what he wants to say becomes clearer and clearer in his mind until it also appears clearer on paper. The intellectual discipline of revising demands that the writer scrutinize each sentence,word by word, to see how he can make it conform precisely to the idea he wants to present. Even by revising someone else's work, a writer can improve his own ability to write.

4. In the beginning it will help to have a skilled teacher supervise the editing of a fledgling writer, but in the end the student must learn to edit by himself.

How the System Works

The entire semester, except for the time given over to the research paper, is divided into two-week segments.

1. The first week consists of reading models, discussing the exact steps of the writing assignment, studying guidelines for the assignment, and talking through sample essays. Each teacher can choose models and assignments of his own choice, although a sample reader and list of assignments are provided on pp. 49–50.

2. The second week is a workshop week for the editorial committees, consisting of groups of approximately six students who sit in a circle and read each other's work and suggest grammatical as well as stylistic revisions.

Procedure for workshop week

1. On the day a theme is due, each student brings to class *six legible copies* of the final copy of his theme. The student will hand these six copies to the members of his workshop group after handing the original to the instructor. When everyone in the group has a copy, the student reads his paper aloud to the group. Each person should follow along, for vocal reading is necessary because the art of rhetoric concerns the ear as well as the eye, and comprehension is sharpened when the senses collaborate in the unraveling of a work.

2. After listening to the writer read his paper, the group is asked to respond with *general* comments regarding the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the paper. Following these comments, the writer reads his paper again, sentence by sentence, pausing after each sentence. The group suggests corrections in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Guidelines are provided to help the evaluation. (See pp. 46–47.) When discussion of one student's paper is complete, it is someone else's turn. In this way every student in each group takes turns in producing and *editing*. The instructor circulates from group to group while the peer editing is going on. He is the chief editor and final authority on the writing product. Any problems or arguments are referred to the teacher for resolution.

3. The student whose essay has been read and edited by the group rewrites his essay, incorporating the group's corrections. (Note: the student retains final say over his work.) Then he places his improved essay in a manila folder, to be set aside until the teacher decides to collect the folder later when several essays have accumulated. During the semester the instructor will assign a grade to the two best essays as judged by the student who wrote them. (In other words, eight essays will be written but only two will be graded officially.) The final semester grade is based on the following suggested point system:

Essay # 1	4 points
Essay # 2	4 points
Research Paper	12 points
Final Examination	8 points
Attendance and completion of work	7 points (see next page)
TOTAL	35 points

Students are encouraged to discuss individual problems with the instructor during scheduled office hours.

Advantages of the System

1. Students are involved; they are not passive, doltish observers.
2. Students try harder than usual because they know that they will read an essay out loud to a group of peers. They feel more on the spot than when they can slip an essay to a teacher, who will read it in private.
3. Students are spending much of their time learning how to edit, which is the only way that improvement in writing takes place.
4. The teacher's load is considerably lightened because fewer papers are officially marked.

Facts To Keep In Mind

1. The students will not catch all errors. In fact, they may edit rather poorly, according to the teacher's standards. But focus on the errors they *do* catch, not on the errors they don't see. Any error caught is one that would have appeared in the final manuscript. The system favors the motivated student, but then, so does the world.
2. This system does not work unless the teacher functions as a strict disciplinarian. The xeroxed copies must be made and distributed. I use a system of points for attendance with work in hand. (See previous page.) Also, you may have to ride herd on some groups to keep them from idle chit-chat.
3. It is important that the teacher keep moving from group to group because as the group observes the way the teacher edits, they slowly learn how to do so themselves
4. Edit only every other week. When students become surfeited with editing, their work is sloppy.
5. The most important step is the second reading. The reader must be sure to pause after each sentence—long enough to allow the peer editors to find errors or to think of a way to improve the sentence. The process cannot be rushed. I do only one essay per half hour.
6. The teacher should not assign long papers. Three hundred words is the maximum. Students cannot concentrate long enough to edit long papers conscientiously.
7. The teacher must explain the guidelines so that each student understands them and can judge an essay by them.
8. Occasionally a group may become too competitive, or certain members may be too harsh in their criticism. In either case, the teacher must interfere as a psychologist to keep the group harmonious. Simply moving one student to another group may solve the problem.

Guidelines for Editing

Guidelines for Evaluating An Essay Emphasising The Thesis

1. Is the thesis appropriately *limited*?
2. Is the thesis stated clearly?
   The following are to be avoided:
   a. A thesis stated in an incomplete sentence.
   b. A thesis worded as a question.
   c. A thesis involving figurative language.
   d. A thesis pulling in different directions.
   e. A muddled thesis.
3. Is the thesis cleared of all *unnecessary* words?
4. Does the essay *stick to the thesis*?
5. Does the essay adequately *prove* the thesis?
6. Does the essay contain examples and details rather than mere generalities?

Guidelines for Evaluating Organization

1. Into how many main ideas is the thesis divided? Are these ideas clearly perceptible? (Does the thesis provide the logical breakdown?)
2. Is each main idea supported by examples and subideas?
3. Are the transitions between main ideas smooth?
4. Are the main ideas equally balanced or is the essay lopsided?
5. Did the writer stick to a single organizing principle?

Guidelines for Evaluating a Narration

1. Does the reader know *when* the action happened, *where* it happened, and *to whom* it happened?
2. Are sufficient details included?
3. Is the story told in chronological order?
4. From what point of view is the story told? Is the point of view consistent?
5. Is the narration well paced? (Are important events stressed whereas unimportant events are given less prominence?)

Guidelines for Evaluating a Description

1. Is the dominant impression clearly stated?
2. Are all of the details focused on the dominant impression?
3. Are the details specific rather than general, vivid rather than vague?
4. Does the description contain some appropriate figures of speech?
5. Does the description come to life?

Guidelines for Evaluating an Essay Developed Through Examples

1. Did the writer use sufficient examples to prove his point?
2. Are the examples relevant?
3. Are the examples made vivid through details?
4. Is each example clearly introduced ("For example," "to illustrate," etc.)
5. Is it clear what the writer is exemplifying?

Guidelines for Evaluating a Definition

1. Does the essay begin with a lexical definition? (Does it place the term in a general category and then show how the term differs from other members of the category?)
2. Does the writer extend his definition so that he keeps answering the question "What is it"?
3. Did the writer make sure that he defines rather than just describes? ("A *felony* is evil" is a description, not a definition.)
4. Did the writer avoid writing in circles, such as defining the term *prostitute* as a woman who "prostitutes herself."
5. Is the definition concise and understandable? After reading the essay, do you understand the term better?

Guidelines for Evaluating a Process Paper

1. Does the writer begin with a clear purpose statement?
2. Are all steps of the process included?
3. Is the order of the steps clear? Can the reader easily follow this order?
4. Does the student appear to have assembled all the information necessary for explaining the process?
5. Is the essay free from muddled explanation?

Guidelines for Evaluating a Comparison/Contrast

1. What are the bases on which the comparison/contrast rests? Are these bases chosen randomly or systematically?
2. Does the essay limit itself to major areas of contrast or does it get bogged down in triviality?
3. Is the comparison/contrast organized with clarity—either vertically or horizontally?
4. Are there sufficient indicators to signal the similarities or differences?
5. Are both sides of the question treated completely?

Guidelines for Evaluating a Causal Analysis

1. Does the thesis indicate clearly that the essay will be dealing with causes or reasons?

2. Does the essay focus on immediate rather than remote causes?
3. Does the essay avoid circular reasoning about cause? (Example of circular reasoning: "The freeways are crowded because too many people drive cars.")
4. Does the essay avoid biased causal reasoning based on personal ideology?
5. Is each cause dealt with separately and clearly so as to enhance the organization of the essay?
6. Are the details of each cause convincing?

Workable Assignments for Editorial Committee Method

1. Personal narration
   Recall a vivid childhood incident that taught you a lesson about life.
   Sample thesis: When my family moved from New York to Washington, D.C., I realized for the first time that life involves inevitable changes.
2. Description
   Describe a place or a person. Focus on a single dominant impression.
   Sample thesis: Mike Boyle's butcher shop is a place of horror.
3. Examples
   Supply three examples of your idea of America's present standard of female (or male) beauty.
   Sample thesis: Today's standard of male beauty is intellectual machismo as revealed in the roles played by movie actors Robert Redford, Clint Eastwood, and Robert DeNiro.
4. Definition
   Define one of the following terms: *punk rock* (music), *pointilism* (painting), *concrete poetry* (literature), *alienation* (psychology).
   Sample thesis: Punk rock is an application of the bizarre to rock music performance.
5. Comparison/contrast
   Contrast anything you wish. Use three or four bases of contrast.
   Sample thesis: Hobbits differ from elves in the way they look, eat, and behave.
6. Causal analysis
   Analyze the causes for Laura's behavior in "Flowering Judas" by Katherine Ann Porter.
   Sample thesis: Laura is miserable because she is an idealist tortured by guilt.
7. Process
   Describe a step-by-step process for writing the research paper.
   Sample thesis: The following steps, if followed conscientiously, will result in a good research paper.
8. Argument (500 words)
   Choose a custom, institution or tradition that you dislike. Argue for its abolition or reform.

Sample thesis: The social security system should be reformed to provide free room and board for old people who are poor.

Sample Assignment Schedule For Editorial Committee Method

The sample schedule listed below is based on the McCuen/Winkler texts; any other text(s) can be substituted. The schedule does not indicate vacation times.

TEXTS: McCuen and Winkler, *Readings for Writers*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981) (RW)
Winkler and McCuen, *Rhetoric Made Plain*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1980) (RP)

Assignment Schedule

First Week
Introduction to course, RP Chapter 2
RW "Salvation," "We are Poor," "A Dept"
Essay #1 Narration
Second Week
Workshop
Workshop
Third Week
RP Chapter 3 Thesis
RW "Hell," "Ngong Farm," "Libido for the Ugly"
Essay #2 Description with Thesis
Fourth Week
Workshop
Workshop
Fifth Week
RP Chapter 4 Organization "The Rape of the Foot"
RW "My Wood," "The Marks of an Educated Man," "The Catbird Seat"
Essay #3 Outline and Essay
Sixth Week
Workshop
Workshop
Seventh Week
RP Chapter 6 Development "The Lost Art of Handwriting," "Mirror, Mirror"
RM "Cop out Realism," "Heaven and Earth in Jest"
Essay #4 Examples
Eighth Week
Workshop
Workshop
Ninth Week
RW "Mary Todd Lincoln," "The Satisfaction of Life," "The Flowering Judas"
"War as a Biological Phenomenon"
Essay #5 Causal Analysis
Tenth Week
Workshop
Workshop
Eleventh Week
RP Chapter 10 The Research Paper

Twelfth Week

Research Paper

Research Paper

Thirteenth Week

RP "What's The Right Word?"

RW "Politics and the English Language," "Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrast," "Diogenes and Alexander," "The Bird and the Machine"

Essay #6 Contrast

Fourteenth Week

Workshop

Workshop

Fifteenth Week

RP Chapter 8 Logic

RW "Introduction to Logic," "Why I Am An Agnostic," "A Modest Proposal," "An Argument against the Payment . . . ," "The Efficacy of Prayer"

Quiz on Logic

Sixteenth Week

Workshop

Workshop

Seventeenth Week

Preparation for Persuasion paper

Semester Final (Persuasion paper)

Creative Imitation—The Earliest Art

PATRICIA SIMMONS TAYLOR

Students must have models for writing. Not given any, they unconsciously find their own models in street language or in textbook jargon (often a form of what Richard Lanham calls the "official style," that national blend of Latinate puffery and mechanical voice). Oral experiences help but writing is different. And it is naive to ask a student to be original, to use his own style, to speak in his own voice before he has had a chance to learn what originality, style, and voice mean in writing.

Imitation means here the rhetorical practice of copying, simulating, and emulating models. Its very constraints encourage creativity. The students observe closely a piece of writing and emulate the model precisely, either as a whole (while using a different subject) or by imitating certain features—its use of details or figures of speech, its tone, its method of analysis. Exact imitation stimulates an interplay between words and ideas and between the mind of the author and the mind of the novice that creates fresh, often astonishing, results. This essay will include examples of different kinds of imitation.

Rationale

Stylistic imitation may well be the earliest method of learning to write. Chaucer and Shakespeare copied endless purple passages. John Ruskin and Benjamin Franklin record at length their imitative techniques and Dylan Thomas speaks of imitating every writer he admired, thinking the copy that resulted not quite an imitation but something marvelously original, like "eggs laid by tigers."

Imitation works for the basic student too. The basic writers, often non-traditional students, need to experience print in an intense way—and they're not likely to have gained that experience through avid reading. Imitation forces a word-by-word confrontation with the printed page.

The most basic imitation—copying—may even start by simply copying interesting material until the sheer physical act of writing becomes familiar. Students will be internalizing English conventions,

certain word choices, sentence structures and the whole sense of how ideas or lyric feelings are formulated and organized.

As students progress, they might copy passages, but make increasingly more complicated changes in the text:

1. They could be asked to change singular subjects to plural ones and vice versa with the consequent need to change the verbs. The rules of subject-verb agreement become integrated into the whole writing process the way they do not with mere exercises. Many other skills can be taught this way.
2. They might change passive verbs to active verbs with all the more complex revisions this requires.
3. They could address a passage to a different audience, say, by rewriting a paragraph from a fashion or sports magazine into one whose audience is a teacher or child. This task requires changes in tone, diction, and sentence length.

Close Imitation—Substance

Our students can use imitation to learn substance as well as style. Adolescents who so often feel life is unfair find strength in thinking about the following passage, the kind of philosophy they're unlikely to encounter in their academic experience. They also see the different kinds of word choices used for varied audiences. They read these versions closely and then try one of their own, keeping to the thought and to the basic sentence patterning of the passage from the Bible.

Original version from Ecclesiastes:

I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, not yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

George Orwell's wry imitation done in sociologese:

Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.

Instructor's imitation to model the process and to show a more typical adult style:

Although we would like to think that the best men of our nation become presidents and leaders, that our prizes go to the most accomplished writers and musicians, that wise, intelligent, compassionate men and women receive our society's highest favors—wealth and a good name—that our finest workers and smartest scholars lead happy lives, it is not so. We are too much ruled by mysterious forces of circumstance and accident.

Sample student imitation of Ecclesiastes:

I went home and thought how, in this world, the teams that win aren't always the best, nor the heroes we choose always the greatest, nor yet peppermint candy to the sweetest kids, nor silver Cadillacs to men who really deserve them, nor government support to genuine artists; but fate and coincidence govern everything.

Imitating Tropes and Schemes

The best way I have found for students to learn figures of speech is to try them out, one by one, themselves. Some teachers like to show the extensive use of tropes (turns of phrase) and schemes (the longer figures of speech) in advertising and in poetry first. But just as Virginia Woolf noted the best way to appreciate and understand a novel is to try to write one yourself, so nothing makes students appreciate forms as much as their creating them. Usually their first attempts show strain; it takes practice to use tropes naturally.

Here are major figures of speech from Edward Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, followed by my students' use of the same figure of speech modeled broadly after the examples but in no way confined by them.

Tropes and Schemes: Students' Imitations

1. PARALLELISM:
   A. He tried to make the law *clear, precise, and equitable.*
   B. It's so late that the dog's snorin', the owl's hootin', the crickets are cricketin', and my mind is swimmin'.
2. ANTITHESIS
   A. "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" (Neil Armstrong as he stepped onto the moon, July 20, 1969).
   B. Our time apart seems an eternity; our time together is but tomorrow's memory.
3. ALLITERATION:
   A. "I should hear him *fly* with the high *fields* and wake to the *farm forever fled* from the childless land" (Dylan Thomas, "Fern Hill").
   B. The restless *sea swell slipped silently* by.
4. ANTIMETABOLE (repetition in reverse order):
   A. "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind" (John F. Kennedy in U.N. speech, 1961).
   B. If man can save the oceans, the oceans will save man.
5. METAPHOR:
   A. On a final examination, several students went down in flames.

B. He loses his fangs after his second cup of coffee.

6. SIMILE:
   A. He had a posture like a question mark.
   B. She had a smile like the 3rd of January; that is, if she was feeling particularly patronizing.
7. USE OF PROPER NAMES FOR A QUALITY:
   A. They were black-leathered men with Elvis Presley sideburns.
   B. Their first date was Tarzan meets Queen Elizabeth.
8. UNDERSTATEMENT:
   A. Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her appearance (Jonathan Swift).
   B. No problem, I merely was expelled from school.
9. PERSONIFICATION:
   A. Mother Tongue is a self-reliant female.
   B. Up North, after a long, cold night, engines get to be *mighty stubborn* about beginning the day.

Imitating Earlier Forms of English

Students, as well as many adults, often have an excessively rigid notion of "proper" English. Students should know something about the history of the English tongue and how dramatically it changes through the centuries.

Yet merely talking about language change does not have the effect of experiencing it. Here, students are asked to imitate a passage written a few centuries ago. Even if they stay quite close to the original as in the following imitation, they feel the changes history has wrought.

Excerpt from Roger Ascham's *Toxophilus: A Treatise on the Art of Shooting With the Bow*, 1545.

> *To see the wind with a man's eyes is impossible, the nature of it is so fine and subtle; yet this experience of the wind had I once myself, and that was in the great snow that fell four years ago. I rode in the high way betwixt Topcliff-upon-Swale and Boroughbridge, the way being somewhat trodden before, by wayfaring men; the fields on both sides were plain, and lay almost yard-deep with snow; the night afore had been a little frost, so that the snow was hard and crusted above; that morning the sun shone bright and clear, the wind was whistling aloft, and sharp, according to the time of the year; the snow in the high way lay loose and trodden with horses' feet; so as the wind blew, it took the loose snow with it, and made it so slide upon the snow in the field, which was hard and crusted by reason of the frost over night, that thereby I might see very well the whole nature of the wind as it blew that day. And I had a great delight and pleasure to mark it, which maketh me now far better to remember it.*

A student's imitation of Ascham:

To know the sea with any other man's eyes is impossible, the nature of it is so personal and profound; yet this experience of the sea had I once myself, and that was in the northern waters two years ago. We rode in the high swell betwixt False Pass and the Bering Sea, the way being empty of seafaring men; the fields of swell surrounding were restless, and so slipped silently by; the morning before had been a low, so that the falling snow was thick and wet; that afternoon the sun shone dim and grey-white, the wind was whispering aloft, and muted, according to the storm; the snow on the high swell curving and tumbling; so as the wind blew, it met the high swell, and became part of it without a trace; thereby I saw very well the whole nature of the snow as it met the swell that day. And I had a great delight and pleasure to mark it, which maketh me now far better to remember it.

Imitation to Learn Grammar

Although the question of whether or not to teach formal grammar remains highly debatable, no one questions the advantage of our student's being able to use those grammatical forms that appear much more often in writing than in speech (like the absolute construction or the various noun substitutes). They're boring to teach by lecture or exercises. But, again, the student can teach himself through imitating various sentence patterns until they become part of his repertoire. It's not important that he learn the nomenclature—it may come to him naturally as he practices the forms, though.

In a basic writing class at UCLA, I used Daiker's book on college sentence combining.[1] The students practiced the various ways information can be displayed through sentence position and structure; they wrote original sentences; they evaluated various sentences. From time to time they integrated the patterns they used into small essays. Finally at the end of the course, they were asked to write an in-class essay using all the patterns they'd learned. They were asked to write about something they enjoyed thinking of. They were to underline various patterns and identify them according to the code I use below. Even with these constraints, their essays were well-organized and rich. The complex sentence patterning seemed to invite a certain density of detail.

Process

1. Student learns individual kinds of sentence structures a la O'Hare or Daiker or Christensen.
2. He practices them individually and in small groups.
3. He consciously includes a couple at a time in larger paragraph writing or essay assignments.
4. He masters them all and writes an essay expressly to use them all.

Key

1 = relative clause
2 = participles
3 = appositives
4 = absolutes
5 = prepositional phrases
6 = subordination
7 = coordination
8 = noun substitutes
- (A) = gerunds
- (B) = infinitives
- (C) = clauses — wh-
- (D) = clauses — that

Student Sample

AN ISLAND OF ENCHANTMENT

6 *As I rest under the shade of a tree next to Sproul Hall*, my mind
4 begins to float toward the Caribbean Sea. *Warm breezes caressing its ocean, birds chirping about and sunrays warming its earth*, Puerto Rico
8D awakes. *That Puerto Rico is my country* is not the only reason I love
8B her so much. *To know why Puerto Rico is an island of enchantment* requires some explanations. This island reflects the beauty of its natural resources as well as its people.

3 *Thirty-five miles wide and a hundred miles long*, it covers the area
3 in which the beauty appears. The rain forests, *humid and large*, are
1 one of the main resources *that attract the tourists*. Many different
6 species of birds are found in the morning time. *When the night*
7 *falls*, the birds lurk about and *they try to find a place* to sleep until
2 the next appearance of a sun ray. *Traveling towards the coast*, my mind wanders to the sea.

2 *Kissing the sand with their lips*, the waves say goodbye. During the
6 night the sea is quiet and mysterious. *When morning springs*, the
2 sun rays gently stroke the island. I can see myself now, *dancing in*
3 *the lukewarm waters* of the Caribbean Sea. The sea water, *deep blue*
6 *and clear-like*, plays with my feet. *As I tried to run away* it catches me and brings me back to the shore. Oh! how I wish I was back there.

1 But above all, it's the people *that I would enjoy to see the most*.
Their warm sense of humor and their hospitality makes me
3 proud to be a part of Puerto Rico. The language, *a romantic one*,
8D is that of Spanish. Many people think *that Puerto Rican is our*
6 *language*, but Spanish is what we speak. *Although I am three thousand miles away from my land*, I can hear the breeze calling my
6 name. *And as I sit under the cool* shade of this tree, I hope someday nearby, my country, I will be able to see.

Exact Imitation

Most enjoyable and stimulating of all is the exact imitation. I have used this technique with professionals, teachers, and students, all of whom have enjoyed the challenge. Exact imitation involves changing the content but staying with particular forms of the original. Imitating figures of speech, tone, sense of the occasion, and grammatical forms engrosses the writer entirely. It is useful in integrating the teaching of literature with writing.

The following is a sample imitation of Shakespeare. I wrote these sentences from Shylock's speech in *The Merchant of Venice* on the board and the students helped work out the imitation, using a very different topic but keeping the passion, hurt, and eloquence that inflamed the original. They may or may not have learned what an isocolon or antithesis is, but they learned the rhetorical effect of these devices. They were impressed enough to want to create their own.

SHAKESPEARE	FEATURE IMITATION	IMITATION WITH CHANGED CONTENT: A JILTED YOUNG LOVER SPEAKING
Shylock:		*She has betrayed me*
He hath disgraced me		*and* pierced me past *forgetting*
and hind'red *me* half *a million,*	alliteration	sneered *at my* sentiments,
laughed *at my* losses, *mocked at*		*scoffed at my pains, condemned*
my gains, scorned my	isocolon	*my family, frustrated my*
Nation, thwarted my	parallelism	*courting*, forgotten my needs,
bargains, cooled my		remembered my faults—and
friends, heated my	antithesis	what's her reason?
enemies—*and what's*		I am "callow youth."
his reason? I am a Jew.		Has not an adolescent a
Hath not a Jew hands,		mind, heart, talents,
organs, dimensions, senses,		ears, tongue, vision—
affections, passions?—fed	mix of	moved by the same
with the same food,	abstract and	music, aflame by the
hurt by the same weapons,	concrete	same Arrow, slave to
subject to the same diseases,		the same melancholies,
healed by the same means		cured by the same
warmed and cooled by		laughter, tormented and
the same winter and		made hopeful by the
summer as a Christian is?		same yesterdays and
		tomorrows as her sophisticated male?

Imitation of Poetry

Since I ask students to imitate, I also do it. I wrote and distributed the following imitation of Yeats. (p. 59) Then I asked students (admittedly

Stylistic Imitation: Poetry

Yeats' "A Prayer For My Daughter"—
first three verses.

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
Whereby the haystack- and roof-leveling wind,
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;
And, for an hour I have walked and prayed
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour
And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,
And under the arches of the bridge, and scream
In the elms above the flooded stream;
Imagining in excited reverie
That the future years had come,
Dancing to a frenzied drum
Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

May she be granted beauty and yet not
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,
Or hers before a looking glass, for such
Being made beautiful overmuch,
Consider beauty of sufficient end,
Lose natural kindness and maybe
the heart-revealing intimacy
That chooses aright, and never find a friend.

Lines in Imitation: "A Curse for My Lover"

Once more the snow is piling high; half blind
Under this cloak of flakes and wind
My mind sleeps on. There is no human house
But Rosie's field and one cold lake
Where summer memories, like waterblooms
Bred in the magic moonlight could be traced.
All this storm long I have stood and listened
Stood and looked under the forms of white.

I have stood and listened all of this storm long
Before the white, ethereal shadows' throng
And under the crystal lake, the frozen fish,
And under my frozen cloak, a crystal heart.
Dreams dredged up from memory and from pain
Image a future for my former lover
Out of the frenzied boredom of my days:

May he be given passion, yet no peace
Nor fireside flame to tend the demon fear;
His restless heart cross continents to find
Only his shallow self each journey's end,
For he, being handsome overmuch, grows fey,
Considers charm an all-sufficient charm.
May he know only artificial lust
Nor choose aright nor ever find a friend.

by Patricia Taylor

more advanced writers), many directly from community colleges to (1) find a prose passage or poem they like very much, (2) select the features they especially want to imitate, and (3) choose a topic different from the passage subject, but one that compels them emotionally. In writing the Yeats' imitation, I was surprised how my own ideas—none of which were in my consciousness when I started—developed through the interaction with Yeats' words. I felt I could not have written this kind of poem without Yeats' help. Now, having explored certain ideas and feelings and having worked out important images and metaphors, I thoroughly appreciate the poet's accomplishment.

Models

The most all-embracing use of imitation is simply that of modeling. Models should be kept before the writer as both guide and goad.

One teacher who had assigned descriptive essays without providing models was appalled at how trite the student papers were: dead, inane, predictable. So he gave his class a section of Mark Twain's *Autobiography* and asked them to imitate it. He highlighted with them the three things that made Twain's essay work so well: the use of anaphora or repetition, the use of inventory or listings, and the appeal to all five senses in a complex way. This teacher, William Gruber, wrote up the results in *College English* 39 (December, 1977), pp. 491-497, in an article called "Servile Copying and the Teaching of English Composition." I include Twain's original and Gruber's student essay here.

MARK TWAIN, from his *Autobiography*:

As I have said, I spent some part of every year at the farm until I was twelve or thirteen years old. The life which I led there with my cousins was full of charm and so is the memory of it yet. I can call back the solemn twilight and the mystery of the deep woods, the earthy smells, the faint odors of the wild flowers, the sheen of rain-washed foliage, the rattling clatter of drops when the wind shook the trees, the far-off hammering of woodpeckers and the muffled drumming of wood-pheasants in the remoteness of the forest, the snapshot glimpses of disturbed wild creatures scurrying through the grass—I can call it all back and make it as real as it ever was, and as blessed. I can call back the prairie, and its loneliness and peace, and a vast hawk hanging motionless in the sky with his wings spread wide and the blue of the vault showing through the fringe of their end-feathers. I can see the woods in their autumn dress, the oaks purple, the hickories washed with gold, the maples and the sumacs luminous with crimson fires, and I can hear the rustle made by the grapes hanging amongst the foliage of the saplings, and I remember the taste of them and the smell. I know how the wild blackberries looked and how they tasted; and the same with the pawpaws, the hazelnuts, and the persimmons; and I can feel the thumping rain upon my head of hickory nuts and walnuts when we

were out in the frosty dawn to scramble for them with the pigs, and the gusts of wind loosed them and sent them down . . .

Student Imitation

It was a haven from the college grind, that Green Giant asparagus farm where I spent my summers working my way through school. The huge metal-walled shop stood back against the long shelterbelts of poplars; and next to it, opposite the little scale house, was the hydrocooler, where the asparagus was chilled before being sent to the cannery. On the other side of the hydrocooler sat the great red water tank that stored water for the cooler; and beyond that was an impressive array of equipment. The green and yellow John Deere tractors in assorted sizes, the little Ford and Oliver tractors, assorted discs, and the cultivators with the winning spiders that kept the fields clear of weeds; ditchers, spreaders, seeders, mowers, sprayers, blades—I can't remember it all . . .

I can still remember changing pipes in nothing but gym shorts and tennis shoes with swarms of bees humming all around me in the fern and never once was I stung. I remember disturbing countless quail and pheasants; and once in a while catching a brief climpse of a coyote or jackrabbit. I remember freezing hands in early spring, when frost covered the pipes in the early morning, and burning hands in late summer, when a line had lain in the hot sun for a day or so. I know the sweet taste of grapes liberated from the next field, and the bitter taste of raw potato from another neighboring unit. I know how to grab a handful of wheat and rub off the chaff, leaving only the crunchy grain, and how good it tastes after a hard day's work. I can call back the ringing in my ears after driving a tractor all day, nonstop, and how good it would have felt to have had some earplugs. I remember the shimmering sun baking us to a golden brown as we lay snoozing on the ground after the pipes were changed; and how once in a while the boss would find us in that position. He never appreciated our attitudes toward work . . .

Imitation of Exposition

Finally, this method is also well adapted to exposition; students who don't read much may not have internalized models of what the more objective forms of writing look like. If teachers assign term papers to classes who have no idea what a term paper looks like, they deserve what they get. A model given to students functions as their own teacher, feeding into their own intuitions. One teacher, Cheryl Boyden, regularly assigns her basic students an expository essay using the central idea "School means different things to different people." They are to follow this model:

"Mountaineering, to be sure, means different things to different practitioners. For an adventurous few, it means ambitious expeditions and first ascents: Alaska, the Andes, the Himalayas. For another comparatively small group, it means an interest in complex climbing problems and the development and refining of techniques. For the rest of us, most of us, it means simply to visit mountains when and where we can and to climb them according to our opportunities and abilities, whether it be the Alps or the Adirondacks, the Catskills or the Rockies."

Samples to imitate

I include a few samples for imitations, one a sentence from Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, the other a paragraph from Mark Twain. Just for fun, I add both an imitation and parody of William Faulkner.

Sample sentence for imitation

"Inside the carriage, which is built on several levels, he sits in the velveteen darkness with nothing to smoke, feeling metal nearer and farther rub and connect, steam escaping in puffs, a vibration in the carriage's frame, a poising in uneasiness, all the others pressed in around, feeble ones, second sheep, all out of luck and time: drunks, old veterans still in shock from ordnance twenty years obsolete; hustlers in city clothes, derelicts, exhausted women with more children than it seems could belong to anyone, stacked about among the rest of things to be carried out to salvation."

Pynchon
(From *Gravity's Rainbow*.)

Sample paragraph for imitation

"Once a day a cheap, gaudy packet arrived upward from St. Louis, and another downward from Keokuk. Before these events, the day was glorious with expectancy; after them, the day was a dead and empty thing. Not only the boys, but the whole village, felt this. After all these years I can picture that old time to myself now, just as it was then: the white town drowsing in the sunshine of a summer's morning; the streets empty, or pretty nearly so; one or two clerks sitting in front of the Water Street stores, with their splint-bottomed chairs tilted back against the walls, chins on breasts, hats slouched over their faces, asleep—with shingle-shavings enough around to show what broke them down; a sow and a litter of pigs loafing along the sidewalks, doing a good business in watermelon rinds and seeds; two or three lonely little freight piles scattered about the "levee"; a pile of "skids" on the slope of the stone-paved wharf, and the fragrant town drunkard asleep in the shadow of them; two or three wood flats at the head of the wharf, but nobody to listen to the peaceful lapping of the wavelets against them; the great Mississippi, the majestic, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along, shining in the sun; the dense forest away on the other side; the "point" above the town, and the "point" below, bounding the river-glimpse and turning it into a sort of sea, and withal a very still and brilliant and lonely one. Presently a film of dark smoke appears above one of those remote "points"; instantly a negro drayman, famous for his quick eye and prodigious voice, lifts up the cry, "S-t-e-a-m-boat a'comin'!" and the scene changes! The town drunkard stirs, the clerks wake up, a furious clatter of drays follows, every house and store pours out a human contribution, and all in a twinkling the dead town is alive and moving. Drays, carts, men, boys, all go hurrying from many quarters to a

common center, the wharf. Assembled there, the people fasten their eyes upon the coming boat as upon a wonder they are seeing for the first time.''

Mark Twain
(From *Life On The Mississippi*)

The original Faulkner (from *The Sound and the Fury*)

When the shadow of the sash appeared on the curtains it was between seven and eight o'clock and then I was in time again, hearing the watch. It was Grandfather's and when Father gave it to me he said, Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciatingly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum *of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools.*

Stylistic imitation of the passage with changed subject

After an echo of the ticking emanated from the clock, the parlor crystallized and I was in memory once more, reviewing the remains. The body was Samuel's and when Samuel was born, his mother said to him, Samuel, I bear you guiltless into this land of rage and hate; this calendar of years must you live to learn the sine qua non *of all mortal life which makes useless your psyche no less than it does the madman's. I bear you not that you embrace this country, but that you rise above it now and ever to abstract lands and not burn all your fires striving to love it. Because no life is ever lived she said. It is not even begun. The grave is our personal piece of land, opening to us its warmth and fertility, and endings are creations of myth and monster.*

Parody of Faulkner's style in general (from *Requiem for a Noun, or Intruder in the Dusk*)

The cold Brussels sprout rolled off the page of the book I was reading and lay inert and defunctive in my lap. Turning my head with a leisure at least three-fourth impotent rage, I saw him standing there holding the toy . . . the bland defiant face beneath the shock of black hair like tangible gas . . .

''So instead of losing the shooter which would have been a mercy you had to lose the ball,'' I said, fixing with a stern eye what I had fathered out of all sentient and biding dust; thinking how across the wax bland treachery of the kitchen linoleum were now in all likelihood distributed the remnants of string beans and cold potatoes and maybe even tapioca.

''You're no son of mine.''

Peter De Vries
(From ''What Can Come of Trying to Read William Faulkner While Minding a Child, or Vice Versa'')

Four Techniques

The O'Hare Method, or How to Grade 90 Papers in 31 Minutes

Sentence-Combining

The Paramedic Method

Easing the Transition from Personal Experience to Objective Analysis

The O'Hare Method, or How to Grade 90 Papers in 31 Minutes

CHARLES DONALDSON

Assumptions

Frank O'Hare of Ohio State University believes students learn the most about writing before they turn in a theme. The learning comes through the act of writing, rewriting, and editing, not from comments a teacher may laboriously put on a completed paper. By the time a paper is turned in, the student is finished with it and is interested only in the grade it earns. O'Hare also notes that professional writers throw away most of what they write and send only their best efforts to editors. English composition students, on the other hand, are expected to submit everything. Efforts that would end in a professional writer's wastebasket are averaged into a course grade for the English student. The O'Hare approach attempts to remedy that situation by not penalizing the student for each effort that fails. Only what a student regards as a best effort is graded.

How The Method Works

- Each student writes a series of three essays on assigned topics.
- Each essay goes through a peer evaluation process before it is completed by the writer.
- The process begins with the writer's final rough draft—the point when the student has written his best, given the time allowed.
- Two other students then comment independently on that draft on separate editing sheets (see sample on p. 71). The only marks on the draft are the numbers or letters down each side of the essay which correspond to comments on the editing sheets and the circled words in the essay which the student editors think might be misspelled.
- Using these editing sheets as a guide, the writer produces the finished essay, which goes into a folder.

- When three essays are completed, the students are organized into groups of three or four. The essay sets are then read and rated. The writer may accept or reject the ratings given by the other students.
- The writer then designates which of the three essays he wants the instructor to grade.
- The instructor then reads only the essay designated best by the writer and grades that paper immediately. The other two essays are given a hasty reading and then the instructor gives a grade on the overall effort—a grade worth half that assigned to the best essay. This precludes a student who writes a sure winner from sloughing off the other two assignments.

Advantages Of The Method

The advantages to this approach for the instructor are obvious. The student writer is motivated to revise. The student writer, during the editing process, also can share the thinking of others writing on a similar subject as well as receive suggestions on how to improve his own paper. The instructor, during the editing sessions, can move through the classroom, offering one-to-one assistance, and, when time comes to grade the papers, he is not bogged down by close reading and marking of 90 papers a class of 30 would generate.

At Santa Monica College, the O'Hare Method proved extremely popular with my English 1 students, and a comparison of their final rough drafts with the eventual finished products showed marked improvements. Interestingly, the peer editing suggestions were not always heeded, yet papers sometimes were drastically revised. In other words, as a result of the peer discussion, the student gave more thought to the subject while considering revision steps. This rethinking produced superior papers. And, because only the best effort would be graded, the students seemed to be willing to try more imaginative approaches in all three efforts than I have found true of students in past semesters dealing with the same assignments.

Further Suggestions

What O'Hare did not amplify adequately at his method workshop, conducted at UCLA, was the need to carefully prepare the class for its editing responsibilities. I found that not only was it advisable to explain explicitly what was wanted in each assignment, but also it was necessary to provide written editing instructions clearly telling students what to look for. Specific guidelines for editing gave student editor-writers more confidence in both tasks, and this was reflected in clearer and more detailed editing comments than were generated in a less structured approach which I tried first. Citing

common errors to look for, such as comma-spliced sentences which cropped up in the first batch of papers, helped eliminate most such errors from the second batch. And some students observed that for the first time they were able to figure out what the teacher meant when such problems were noted.

Since I found that it was a good idea to follow O'Hare's model for the editing sheets (see samples on p. 71), I dittoed off a number. The students preferred using the sheets I provided,although they could have made their own with no difficulty. The sheets bear places for names of both the writer and the editor. One has the number 1 on the top left-hand corner where the rules begin. A second will have the letter A. (The distinction between numbers and letters is to assure that each peer editor edits separately from the other.) The writer receives a copy of each editing sheet, handling the first editor the numbered sheet. When that is returned, the essay is turned over to the second editor together with the sheet to be lettered. The first comment (1 or A) is an overall impression of the paper. The second comment (2 or B) also may deal with an overall point. If not, it should comment on the title. Student editors are asked to make as many positive comments as negative ones, and the editing advisory sheets need to note what good points can be looked for. The comments can be as simplistic as "Wow, I like this," or "This is awkward," because the student writer can ask the student editor for a fuller explanation when the paper and the editing sheet are returned. With guidance from an advisory sheet, I found comments tended to be specific and concise. Each twenty-minute editing session produced from eight to ten comments on each paper.

By way of additional motivation, students who failed to bring in final rough drafts on time for the editing sessions suffered a grade penalty. Similarly, editors were warned that failure to do a conscientious job would result in a grade penalty for their overall effort. Enforcement of these warnings the first time around had a positive effect, and students who initially felt inadequate as editors soon were calling for instructor assistance and gaining confidence through one-to-one coaching.

A popular element in this method was the rapid reading of the papers in the classroom. At first it seems as if you are involved in some sort of race-against-the-clock stunt, but the students enjoyed witnessing the actual decision making and there were no complaints on the grades assigned, although there were a number of groaned, "I knew I'd get that. I should have. . . ." Fewer groans occurred at the reading and grading of the second batch of three essays.

Errors that seemed to be repeated in papers were noted so that I could include a pointer on them in the next advisory for student editors. This tended to focus attention on a few widespread problems, and the resulting improvements were heartening.

The idea that after the paper was evaluated by peers and, possibly, the instructor, it could still be revised before a final grade would be assigned was repeatedly greeted with a degree of disbelief and continued enthusiasm. Equally popular was the idea that only the best effort would be judged. The whole concept resulted in an enthusiasm for revision I had not observed among my students before.

Sample Editing Sheet With Typical Student Responses In Numbers

author: J. Smith
editor: M. Ogg

1. Right on. This problem does make this a "most despicable thing." And it is funny.
2. Title doesn't fit. The machine is taking away socks.
3. Good literary allusion.
4. Is wash day one word or two? You use it as one word five lines down.
5. "One item" becomes a plural "socks" in the next line.
6. Love that pun! A real groaner!
7. I like your transition from first to second paragraph. Shouldn't you add "that" after "contend"?

Sample Essay—Rough Draft

1 A

2 Sock It To Me B

It sits like a gleaming white
3 Cyclops in my laundry room, C
supposedly a docile tool to aide
4 my wash day chores. Actually, it
causes more problems than it
solves because it has acquired a
5 taste for one item it is supposed to
wash—my socks. It can't get
through a washday without
gobbling down at least one sock, D
leaving me with a collection of
6 socks that is truely unmatched. E
7 Some might contend the F
machine is merely man's servant
and cannot be blamed for the

Sample Editing Sheet With Student Responses in Letters

A. I like the satirical tone of your essay.
B. I would prefer a title like "The Monster" because "Sock It To Me" is too cute.
C. Strong simile, but I'd like to see the antecedent for *it*—"my washing machine."
D. I like your personification here, especially "gobbling."
E. The socks are unmatched, not the collection.
F. Are you referring to machines in general or just your washing machine? Clarify.

Sentence-Combining

JO RAY McCUEN

For writers who lack fluency and who dread the terror of the blank page, practice in sentence combining is an excellent way to overcome the frustration of cranking up the writing process. The general theory behind sentence combining is that inherent in each human brain is a powerful sentence-making mechanism. In other words, everyone has a natural capacity to change sentences by adding words, deleting words, moving words about, or substituting one word for another. Many teachers claim that sentence combining accomplishes the following:

1. It increases the writer's fluency.
2. It promotes syntactic maturity.
3. It teaches grammar.

In approaching the technique of sentence combining, we have used three major works in the field: *Sentence Combining* by William Strong, *College Sentence Combining: The Writer's Option* by Donald A. Daiker et al, and *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric* by Francis and Bonnie Jean Christensen. Any teacher who wants to study sentence combining in depth is directed to these three volumes.

A. STAGE ONE: Basic Sentence Combining

In this stage the student is asked to combine basic kernel sentences into a more complex structure. According to Strong, a kernel is "a kind of fixed formula or frame that the brain uses when sending or receiving messages."

For example:

The sailor ate his breakfast.

This basic kernel sentence can generate literally billions of further sentences, each unique and understandable. Here are three possibilities:

1. The sailor ate his breakfast in his cabin.
2. The breakfast consisted of pineapple, oatmeal, and eggs.
3. The sunlight fell through the porthole.

The student's task is to turn these three kernel sentences into more readable prose by combining them. The student might come up with the following transformation:

> While the sunlight fell through the porthole in his cabin, the sailor ate his breakfast consisting of pineapple, oatmeal, and eggs.

Or, he might come up with a different transformation, like this:

> As the sailor ate his breakfast of pineapple, oatmeal, and eggs, the sunlight fell through the porthole.

The point is that ideas can be expressed in a variety of ways, and the process of selecting words to turn a phrase is something that a writer can teach himself to do. Sentence combining is one good way to do it. Through a list of kernel sentences, the student is given the content of what to say and his job is to say it the best he can by combining the kernel sentences into a single sentence. As the list of kernel sentences grows longer, the resulting sentence will often be more sophisticated. Since spelling and other technical details are provided, the only thing the student needs to worry about is structure and punctuation. This practice will give the student a feel for sentence structure and will result in better sentences.

EXERCISES

Directions: Each of the following passages is organized into clusters. Each cluster must be transformed into a single sentence.

MODEL

Original clusters

First Cluster
1. A letter had landed on Jack's desk.
2. The letter was from the Security Office.
3. The letter requested a report.
4. The report was to be about the deportation of aliens.

Second Cluster
5. The letter had an effect on Jack
6. The effect was paralyzing.
7. Jack was responsible for all aliens.

Third Cluster
8. Jack was no miracle worker.
9. Jack adopted a typical obfuscating tactic.
10. Jack made a vague reply.
11. The reply said nothing.

Possible transformation:

First Cluster Transformed: A letter from the Security Office requesting a report about the deportation of aliens landed on Jack's desk.

Second Cluster Transformed: The letter had a paralyzing effect on Jack because he was responsible for all aliens.

Third Cluster Transformed: Since Jack was no miracle worker, he simply ignored the letter and adopted the typical obfuscating tactic of sending a vague reply that said nothing.

1. a. The Dutch East India Company was chartered by the States-General of the Netherlands.
   b. It was to expand trade.
   c. It was to assure close relations between the Dutch government and its colonial enterprises in Asia.
2. a. Benjamin Franklin was an American statesman.
   b. He was a printer.
   c. He was a scientist.
   d. He was a writer.
   e. He was born the son of a tallow chandler and soapmaker.
3. a. A hat provides considerable psychological security.
   b. It protects the face.
   c. A hat hides one's face.
   d. The hiding is from curious onlookers.
   e. These onlookers threaten one's identity.
4. a. Buddhism arose in India in the 6th century B.C.
   b. It was a protest.
   c. The protest was against the overdeveloped ritualism of the Hindus.
   d. The overdeveloped ritualism was particularly in the area of sacrificial cults.
   e. Sometimes these sacrificial cults even involved sacrificing human beings.
5. a. The passage of liquor laws has always been prompted by a public desire.
   b. The desire was to prevent immoderate use of intoxicants.
   c. The passage was also prompted by the need to raise revenue.
   d. Liquor laws are legislation designed to restrict, regulate, or totally abolish the manufacture, sale, and use of alcoholic beverages.

ANSWERS

Here are some sample answers. Many other possibilities exist.

1. Chartered by the States-General of the Netherlands, the Dutch East India Company was to expand trade and to assure close relations between the Dutch government and its colonial enterprises in Asia.
2. Benjamin Franklin, born the son of a tallow chandler and soapmaker, became an American statesman, printer, scientist, and writer.
3. A hat provides psychological security by protecting the face and hiding it from curious onlookers who threaten one's identity.
4. Buddhism arose in India in the 6th century B.C. as a protest against the overdeveloped ritualism of the Hindus, particularly their sacrificial cults that often involved human sacrifices.

5. The passage of liquor laws—legislation designed to restrict, regulate, or totally abolish the manufacture, sale, and use of alcoholic beverages—has always been prompted by the public's desire to prevent immoderate use of intoxicants, but also by its need to raise revenue.

Numerous additional exercises can be found in *Sentence Combining* by William Strong and in *The Writer's Options* by Donald A. Daiker et al.

B. STAGE TWO: Sentence Generating

In this stage the student is asked to go beyond the mere combining of sentences to completing or expanding sentences by adding ideas of his own. This technique will help the student to develop the habit of creating constructions on his own instead of relying completely on the words supplied by someone else. Creative pattern exercises can help the student to transfer sentence-combining skills into actual writing. For example, here is a kernel sentence to be expanded:

Mr. Jones lived in a mansion.

The expansion appears in capital letters.

Mr. Jones, WHO HAD MADE MILLIONS ON THE STOCK MARKET, lived in a mansion IN A SECLUDED WOODS SURROUNDED BY VAST GREEN MEADOWS.

From expanding a single kernel sentence, the student can move to expanding several kernel sentences until an entire paragraph is formed. For example, here are four kernel sentences followed by their expansion into a paragraph:

1. The hotel kitchen upset them.
2. It could ruin the simplest dish.
3. Today the corned beef looked terrible.
4. They decided to cook on an electric stove in their room.

Expansion: The hotel kitchen, with its inferior service, upset them. It could ruin the simplest dish, even an ungarnished poached egg. Today the corned beef looked terrible, like a lump of altogether odious black grease. They decided to cook on an electric stove in their room, thus avoiding the kitchen's inevitable bungling of meat, vegetable, and baked goods.

Sentences can be generated by the following means: coordination, subordination, relative construction, participial construction, prepositional construction, appositive, or absolute construction. An example of each follows. The generated portion appears in italics.

1. Coordination:
   Cassandra was a Greek prophetess, *and she was the daughter of Priam.*
2. Subordination:
   While it is still solemn in tone, the Catholic requiem today reveals a more joyful attitude than it used to.

3. Relative Construction:
   The Japanese Samurai were Japanese feudal knights *who arose during the 12th century wars between the Taira and Minamoto clans.*
4. Participial Construction:
   Wagner's opera *Tristan and Isolde, based on Gottfried von Strassburg's version of the Arthurian legend,* represents the fullest musical and theatrical expression of German romanticism.
5. Prepositional Construction:
   Without the blessing of Luther, the German Peasants' War (1524–26) was destined for ultimate defeat.
6. Appositive
   It is precisely to keep infants and children from being battered—*to give them a temporary home, to feed and house them, and to provide some psychological counseling*—that half-way houses have been established in many major cities.
7. Absolute Construction:
   The enemy grew more menacing, *bombs exploding every ten minutes.*

EXERCISES

Directions: Add at least one clause or phrase to the sentences below. Try for variety by adding your clauses or phrases to different nouns.

MODEL

Original sentence:

The formal gardens were turned into enormous vegetable patches.

Transformation:

The formal gardens, *that had been admired for their neoclassical symmetry*, were turned into enormous vegetable patches.

1. a. The Japanese destroyers were skulking by the eastern cove.
   b. The rear admiral had taken over only two days before.
   c. Still, his task force should have wiped out the enemy.
2. a. Members of the postwar baby boom are now young adults.
   b. They, too, worry about the effects of inflation and high interest rates.
3. a. It may seem ridiculous to worry about a holocaust.
   b. However, common sense dictates that the possibility must be confronted honestly.
4. a. Clearly, the same types of people who now swell the ranks of our migratory workers probably in former times made up the bulk of our pioneers.
   b. This seems to be the case in the settlement of all new countries.
   c. The fact is that superior individuals undoubtedly play a major role in shaping a nation, but so do the individuals at the other extreme.

5. a. *Gone with the Wind* is still one of the world's most widely read novels.
   b. Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler still manage to keep readers enthralled through hundreds of pages.
   c. Today's readers of novels love to escape into the life of Atlanta's Peach Tree Street and the surrounding plantations.

ANSWERS

Here are some sample answers. Many other possibilities exist.

1. *To supply their starved, sick garrison*, the Japanese destroyers were skulking by the eastern cove, *dropping medical supplies and food overboard.* The rear admiral, *commanding the flotilla*, had taken over only two days before, *his force formed of worn units who longed to go home.* Still, his task force, *with the advantages of radar, surprise, and superior firepower,* should have wiped out the enemy.
2. Members of the postwar baby boom are now young adults *looking for jobs, buying new homes, and pursuing the American dream. Having become responsible adults,* they too worry about the effects of inflation and high interest rates *that eat up savings accounts and cause bankruptcy of businesses.*
3. It may seem ridiculous to worry about a holocaust—*a third world war in which an entire continent is wiped out.* However, *when we study the historical trends of world powers and realize how simple it is to create nuclear power,* our common sense dictates that the possibility must be confronted honestly.
4. Clearly, the same types of people who now swell the ranks of our migratory workers—*adventurers, malcontents, and fugitives from justice*—probably in former times made up the bulk of our pioneers. This seems to be the case in the settlement of all new countries, *including now advanced nations like Australia, Siberia, and South Africa.* The fact is that superior individuals undoubtedly play a major role in shaping a nation, but so do the individuals at the other extreme *—the poor, the outcasts, the misfits, and those in the grip of some overpowering passion.*
5. *Because of its enormous romantic appeal, Gone with the Wind* is still one of the world's most widely read novels. Scarlett O'Hara, *the courageous but self-centered Southern belle,* and Rhett Butler, *the swashbuckling rebel with a tender heart,* still manage to keep readers enthralled through hundreds of pages. *Revolted by drab industrial life, tired of stories about drugs and depression, and eager to experience a bit of old-style romance,* today's readers of novels love to escape into the life of Atlanta's Peach Tree Street and the surrounding plantations, *where slaves took loving care of the masters, where men placed women on a pedestal, and where honor meant more than money.*

A wealth of additional exercises can be found in *Sentence Combining* by William Strong and in *The Writer's Options* by Donald A. Daiker et al.

C. STAGE THREE: Judging the Sentence

The last stage of sentence combining focuses on producing a mature style. Students must avoid "stone deaf" writing that demonstrates an ability to combine sentences but nevertheless sounds utterly devoid of any rhythm or life. Here is a typical example:

> The little red house in the ugly run-down neighborhood that had suffered through numerous attacks of violence by hideous bands of hoodlums who were poor and uneducated was finally burned down.

Beyond just combining sentences, students must learn to judge among combination possibilities in order to choose the best sentence. Since a mature style must say much in little space while also saying it clearly as well as euphoniously, the challenge is enormous. The options are numerous since a writer chooses from among endless possibilities. Variations in kind, position, and frequency differentiate individual styles. According to Christensen, a mature style (as opposed to a childish style) is marked by a short base sentence expanded through modifiers into a cumulative sentence.

One way to explain the structure of a sentence is to break it down into various levels of generality. The main or base clause is usually stated in general or abstract or plural terms. Then the writer shifts down into a lower level of generality or abstraction or to singular terms and goes back over this same ground at this lower level. Following are three examples illustrating this principle. Each level of generality is treated numerically in descending order from general to specific:

1 Napoleon's men marched forward,
  2 boots buried in snow,
  2 icicles forming on their eyelids,
    3 making them look inhuman and grotesque.

1 The drawing is sharp and clear,
  2 its lines few but sure
    3 as they present figures of effective clarity.

1 Women's drive for equality has stimulated a flux in all the old patterns
  2 from which today a new pattern of women is emerging,
    3 their guiding commitment, autonomy;
    3 their chief rule, not to learn to let themselves become dependent.

Students can develop an ear to judge the best possible version of several sentences created through sentence combining or sentence generating. In judging the various versions of sentences, the following criteria should be used as guidelines:

1. Clarity (Which version is the clearest?)
2. Economy (Which version is the most economical?)

3. Emphasis (Which version is the most emphatic?)
4. Stylistic sophistication—like wit, balance, texture, and tone (Which version sounds best?)

EXERCISES

Directions: Choose from each group of two sentences below the one you find most effective, and be prepared to explain why.

MODEL:

A. Swiss watchmakers are trained by an apprentice system and they work under an accomplished master for years before they are allowed to work independently.

B. Trained by an apprentice system, Swiss watchmakers work under an accomplished master for years before they are allowed to work independently.

ANSWER:

Model B is more emphatic because it subordinates a participial phrase to the base sentence rather than having two base sentences joined by coordination. In this case, the information provided in the base sentence is the most important.

1. a. He was trying to turn on the light, groping helplessly in the dark.
   b. He was, groping helplessly in the dark, trying to turn on the light.
2. a. While they were clothed in colorful uniforms, the three army captains signed the papers from headquarters.
   b. Clothed in colorful uniforms, the three army captains signed the papers from headquarters.
3. a. After a seizure, the grand mal victim will often just lie stretched out, his body shivering, his eyes half open, and his voice unable to utter a word.
   b. After a seizure, the grand mal victim will often just lie stretched out, his body shivering, and his eyes are half open, and his voice is unable to utter a word.
4. a. *Ecumenism* is a term applied to the movement aimed at unifying rather than separating the Protestant churches of the world.
   b. *Ecumenism* is a term applied to the movement aimed at unifying rather than to separate the Protestant churches of the world.
5. a. Drinks with publishers for hours was a habit developed by the aging novelist, who was suffering from a deep depression which came from having lost popularity with his reading audience.
   b. Suffering from a deep depression due to loss of popularity with his reading audience, the aging novelist developed the habit of spending hours drinking with publishers.
6. a. Fire—the phenomenon of combustion as seen in light, flame, and heat—is one of the basic tools of human culture.

b. Fire is one of the basic tools of human culture—as seen in light, flame, and heat.

7. a. The process of manufacturing gelatin, that is, removing foreign substances, boiling the material in distilled water, and purifying it of all chemicals used in freeing the gelatin from the connective tissues, is a complex one.
   b. The process of manufacturing gelatin is a complex one that involves removing foreign substances, boiling the material in distilled water, and purifying it of all chemicals used in freeing the gelatin from the connective tissues.
8. a. In the second version, the Madonna is holding the limp body of Jesus, a look of deep sorrow shadowing her face.
   b. In the second version, the Madonna is holding the limp body of Jesus and a look of deep sorrow is shadowing her face.
9. a. Its base corroded by water, the tower slowly leaned toward the East.
   b. Because its base had been corroded by water, the tower slowly leaned toward the East.
10. a. At several colleges in the United States, a student can get a doctoral degree without ever having to do research, taking a qualifying examination, or submitting a thesis.
    b. At several colleges in the United States, a student can get a doctoral degree without ever having to do research, take a qualifying examination, or submit a thesis.

ANSWERS

1. a; 2. b; 3. a; 4. a; 5. b; 6. a; 7. b; 8. a; 9. a; 10. b

Numerous additional exercises can be found in *Sentence Combining* by William Strong and in *The Writer's Options* by Donald A. Daiker et al.

List of Other Textbooks Incorporating Sentence Combining

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The Paramedic Method

GARY COLOMBO

In his recent book, *Revising Prose*, Richard Lanham presents a simple, step-by-step technique for resuscitating writing that has withered under the influence of what he calls the "Official Style." The idiom of bureaucrats, professionals, administrators, and academics, the Official Style has become, according to Lanham, the dominant prose style of our time. And anyone who has wrinkled a brow over a tax form or mucked through a sociology text knows how pervasive and perverse this style can be. Our political and corporate leaders favor it for its ambiguity and its euphemisms; our bureaucrats prefer it because it combines anonymity and authority. After all, what self-respecting department head could content himself with a simple "You're fired" when it's possible to intone a declaration as grand as, "It has been determined to be necessary to terminate your continued tenure in the capacity in which you have served"?

From a bureaucrat's pen this kind of guff might inspire rage, frustration, or just a good laugh. But the Official Style has spread far beyond the realms of administrative power. It has, in fact, become the most prevalent style in our colleges and universities.

Student writers adopt Officialese for several very practical reasons. Trying to overcome their initial awkwardness with the language, many inexperienced writers imitate the texts, articles, and magazines they encounter in their academic work. But while such modeling can help them deal with grammatical errors and even some of their syntactical clumsiness, it just as often has the effect of petrifying their prose into an unintentional parody of Officialese, simply because many of these models themselves offer object lessons in the Official Style. In addition, students usually find the Official Style relatively easy to learn: working in Officialese, the novice can spare himself the trouble of harrowing his brain for the right verb or phrase to fit his thought; he merely selects a cliché from the verbal repertoire always ready to hand. And finally, the Official Style offers the beginning writer the same seductive qualities it does the hardened bureaucrat: it gives students the chance to speak with polysyllabic power and the authority of brash generalization; yet it also extends the comfort of being abic to camouflage a half-formed (or half-baked) thought within the murk of a fuzzy construction.

Thus, entranced by the powers of Officialese, the beginner can't possibly settle for a bald statement like, "I conducted the experiment carefully." Instead he has to conjure up something really impressive like, "The experimental procedure was carried through to the point of completion with the highest regard for caution and carefulness."

The dangers of Officialese are clear. Because the Official Style prefers the verb "to be" (including all passive forms) above any active verb, it often distorts the sentences's natural agent-action-object relationship. If we wanted then to translate "Jim kicked John" into Officialese, we'd only have to add an impersonal introductory formula and shunt the verb into a noun to get, "There was a kicking interaction between John and Jim." Notice how ambiguity creeps into the sentence as soon as we fracture the normal agent-action-object relation; as the sentence reads now, we can't tell who was kicking whom.

We can carry our sample translation farther by adding yet another impersonal introduction and by embellishing with a few extra prepositional phrases: "It was observed that there was a pattern of kicking behavior exhibited within the relationship between John and Jim." Here, note how the formulas and the prepositional phrases conspire to reduce the sentence into a plodding monotone—"It was observed/that there was a pattern/of kicking behavior/exhibited within . . . etc." Officialese not only robs prose of its intellectual rigor, it kills off its native beauty as well.

I exaggerated the last example to highlight the effects of the Official Style. Now, however, let's turn to a genuine piece of student writing, this one taken from a young camp counselor's description of his summer duties. Listen to the way the Official Style distorts this teenager's voice, making him come across like a pompous bureaucrat:

> *It was in general a matter of agreement among the counselors of the camp that twelve-year-old boys often were involved in a lot of aggressive behavior. Consequently, on several occasions the counselors resorted to the method of explaining to their charges the negative aspects of their fighting. Other responsibilities assumed by the counselors were such things as seeing to it that the boys were kept dry in times of rain or when near the creek .*

To deflate this kind of verbal flatulence, Lanham suggests the Paramedic Method of prose revision—so-called because it offers only emergency treatment, not a cure, for the problems of Officialese. Here are the P.M.'s seven basic steps:

The Paramedic Method

1. Circle the prepositions.
2. Circle the "to be" forms.
3. Ask "Who's kicking whom?"
4. Put this "kicking" action in a simple (not a compound) active verb.

5. Start fast—no mindless introductions!
6. Substitute verbs and appropriate nouns for all unnecessary prepositional phrases and nominalizations.
7. Read aloud with emphasis to check the rhythm.

The first two steps help the student focus the major problem areas in an Officialese sentence—the "to be" forms and the attendant prepositional phrases. Once these have been isolated, the student can move on to ask "Who's kicking whom?" This question forces the student to reconsider the sentence's true subject (the "kicker") and object (the "kickee"). Thinking back to our summer camp passage, we realize that the "camp counselors" is the real subject—not the anonymous "It" that stands at the sentence's beginning.

Step 4 asks us to determine the action that's done by this "kicker." Usually, the sentence's real action lies buried in a nominalization or hidden in a prepositional phrase. In this case, the phrase "was a matter of agreement among" conceals the simple, active voice verb "agreed." In the predicate, the long-winded noun clause "that twelve-year-old boys often were involved in a lot of aggressive behavior" similarly conceals the idea "twelve-year-old boys like to fight." Thus, applying steps 1 through 4, we have the revision:

> *In general, the camp counselors agreed that twelve-year-old boys like to fight.*

Step 5 (Start fast!) would have us trim "In general" down to "Generally" and prune away any other unnecessary introductory formulas that might occur. Step 6 (Substitute verbs for prepositional phrases and nominalizations) doesn't pose a problem since we've already eliminated as many prepositional phrases as possible. Here's the final revision together with a rough re-working of the rest of the passage:

> *Generally, the camp counselors agreed that twelve-year-old boys like to fight. Often, we had to explain to them why they shouldn't. We also had to keep them dry . . .*

As you can see, the P.M. trims a good deal of fat out of student prose. To encourage students with their revisions, Lanham suggests they measure their success by calculating a "Lard Factor" for each sentence. To derive the Lard Factor of a revision just apply the following formula:

Tot. # words in original - Tot. # words in rewrite ÷ Tot. # words in orig.

Using this equation, we can calculate the Lard Factor for our revision of the camp counselor sentence:

26 - 11 = 15 ÷ 26 = 57%

Student prose should render a Lard Factor of about 50% after a close revision. Here are just a few more sample sentences:

Examples

1. This sentence is in need of an active verb.
   Revision: This sentence needs an active verb.
   Lard Factor = 30%
2. We are not surprised or shocked by her story or the manner in which she tells it.
   Revision: Her story and manner of telling it neither shock nor surprise us.
   Lard Factor = 35%
3. For the writer, the practice of bad writing is harmful, for it results in an inhibition of his responses to intellectual and imaginative stimuli.
   Revision: Bad writing inhibits intellectual and imaginative response.
   Lard Factor = 71 %

EXERCISES: Revising The Official Style

Directions: Rewrite the following passages by eliminating as much lard as possible. Depending on one's audience and purpose, keep close to original or revise totally.

1. The claim that cigarettes calm the nerves is invalidated by the fact that nicotine is, in fact, a stimulant.
2. Our client is anxious to close this matter and is willing to make some arrangement for monthly payments in order to collect this overdue account. It will be to your advantage to respond to this letter as soon as possible, so as to avoid further debts and possible court appearances. Please govern yourself accordingly.
3. Of course, recognition of the fact that most allergies were stress related had to be made and accepted on my part.
4. When the sorting of the various problems was taking place, additional vitamins were introduced, cocktails reduced to a minimum, and a regular exercise program began.
5. It has been some time since I last heard from you and since I am not in receipt of your confirmation letter, I thought it be best to reiterate our position.
6. The 19th century saw the beginning of a shift in attitudes toward those called insane, but to this day a social stigma is clearly evident for this group.

Answer Sheet For "Revising The Official Style"

1. Strict revision: The fact that nicotine is a stimulant invalidates the claim that cigarettes calm the nerves.
   Loose revision: Since nicotine stimulates the nerves, cigarettes cannot be said to calm them.
2. Our client wants monthly payments on this overdue account. Please answer this letter immediately or face added interest penalties and, possibly, court appearances.

3. I needed to accept the fact that most allergies come from stress.
4. While we sorted out our problems, we took more vitamins, drank fewer cocktails, and exercised regularly.
5. Since I haven't received your confirmation letter, I now reiterate our position.
6. The social stigma attached to persons called insane began to lessen in the nineteenth century, yet it clearly still exists today.
   QR:
   In the 19th century we began to change our attitudes toward supposedly insane people, but today we still stigmatize them socially.

Easing the Transition from Personal Experience to Objective Analysis

DONALD HEIDT

The Problem

A persistent difficulty faced by colleges and universities is that of moving students from personal to objective writing. This problem occurs because an overwhelming number of students appear in college English classes totally unprepared for scholarly writing assignments. It would be extraordinarily difficult for such a struggling writer to analyze the economic effects of admitting New Mexico to the Union, or to contrast the tragic flaw of Othello with that of Macbeth. Consequently, low-level writers are placed in special classes where the writing is limited to simple personal experiences designed eventually to raise the students' skills to normal college entrance levels.

Typically, as a part of this remedial course the student will be encouraged to write freely about subjects he knows best—himself, his family, his social interests, and life ambitions—until the instructor feels that the student has sufficient detail to develop an essay. At this point the instructor shows the students methods of organizing the rough notes and, perhaps simultaneously, gives the student insight into the relationship between detail and generalization. In subsequent steps, the student focuses on syntax, grammar, mechanics, and spelling, this entire process—from free writing through polishing—carried out in as nonthreatening an atmosphere as is compatible with productivity. At the conclusion of the course, the teacher assumes that the student will enter the transfer composition course and be able to complete it successfully. However, teachers have found that often the transition from personal experience writing to the writing demanded in the regular composition course and in other disciplines has never been fully completed.

Although writing about personal experiences can relax a student and thus overcome writing blocks, although personal values clarification can benefit the student, and although it is possible to write analytically about personal experiences, eventually the student will have to think, and to express thought about nonpersonal experiences.

To help students move to this more objective posture, I find it effective to use personal experience content only long enough to see that the individual student organizes and relates details to generalizations with some confidence, at which time the course content shifts toward the non-personal-experience writing generated by a series of low-key exercises as presented in the following pages.

The Exercises

Exercise 1: Junk

Comment

This exercise usually elicits responses that combine personal experience and *fantasy,* thus constituting a first step away from pure personal experience.

Instructions

Students are to write about a hypothetical search through a closet or junk drawer, wherever it is that they store those items with which they cannot bear to part: e.g., ticket stubs from a concert or sporting event, pictures, matchbooks, old letters, padlocks without keys, etc. After mentioning and briefly describing a variety of items, the students should "showcase," i.e., focus on one item, describe it in detail, and explain why that item has significance for them.

Time

When used as an in-class project, this exercise takes about one half hour to complete.

Exercise 2: Offbeat Topic Sentences

Comment

By their nature, these topic sentences cause students to rely on imagination and/or to synthesize past experiences into new combinations. In either case, students will not be writing about personal experiences in a pure form.

Instructions

Students have the option of developing one of the following topic sentences, showcasing as in Exercise 1.

A. While listening to the Vivaldi Kazoo Concerto, Betty reminisced about her recent date with Robert Redford.
B. After St. Oscar Goldberg was martyred and buried, his tomb became the site of innumerable miracles.
C. Only the word *bizarre* comes close to describing the most recent antics of the Fernwood Flasher.
D. Last week, the Pacoima Moat and Drawbridge Company ("Serving Greater Pacoima Since 1979, We Specialize in Alligators, Piranhas, and Green Scum") performed many unusual services.
E. After winning the Marty Feldman look-alike contest, Howard made a unique series of commercials for a major brewery.

Time

Students can handle this well in a fifty-minute period.

Exercise 3: Pattern Analysis

Comment

This exercise promotes observation and analysis of nonverbal stimuli, and it forces students to respond to a situation that can be validated objectively.

Instructions

Ask the students to look at the eight cats (See Figure 1, p. 93), to analyze the patterns, and to draw the missing cat in the space provided. Then the students are to write out the process by which they arrived at their design.

Time

Students can complete this exercise in one half hour or less.

Exercise 4: Comic Strips

Comment

Since this exercise uses comic strips, it tends not to cause anxiety, but it does nonetheless stimulate students to analyze verbal content provided by someone other than themselves.

Instructions

Early in the term, ask students to collect comic strips from their local newspaper for a month. Once they have their collection, have them work with one particular sequence of strips of their own choosing, the basic emphasis to be on characterization. After giving some general insights into the comic strip characters, the students are to showcase by concentrating on prominent traits, using questions and other specifics to support their analysis. To help the students, provide them with questions, such as the following: What does the character say, think, and do? What do the other characters say or think about him? How do they treat him? What are the character's motives or intentions? What means does the character use to carry out his intentions or to achieve his goals? What consequences follow from the character's methods? What values give direction to the character's life? For example, where does the character stand on issues concerning religion, esthetics, ethics, politics, economics, and education? What presumptions does the character make about the nature of man and the universe?

Time

The actual writing time varies according to the scope of the assignment. A one-paragraph analysis can be completed in one fifty-minute period, an essay in two periods, if the selection of a particular strip and much of the prewriting has already been done outside of class.

A Variation

Group the students in pairs for this assignment. In general, this pairing causes students to transcend, or at least to test, their personal views.

Exercise 5: Forced Awareness[1]

Comment

This exercise differs from the previous four in two significant ways. First, the transition from personal experience writing to objective analysis is condensed and more abrupt; second, the student must consciously acknowledge the shift.

Instructions

The students are to write three paragraphs, one on each topic given below.

A. Describe a situation that you consider a turning point in your life. What were you like before this event or situation? What were you like afterwards? Was this change painful, pleasant, or both? Be as specific as possible, citing names, dates, times, places.

B. In his novel *Demian*, Hermann Hesse presents this analogy of human development: "The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world. The bird flies to God. That God's name is Abraxas." (Abraxas, a mythic divinity, represents the synthesis of good and evil.) Write a paragraph explaining Hesse's analogy.

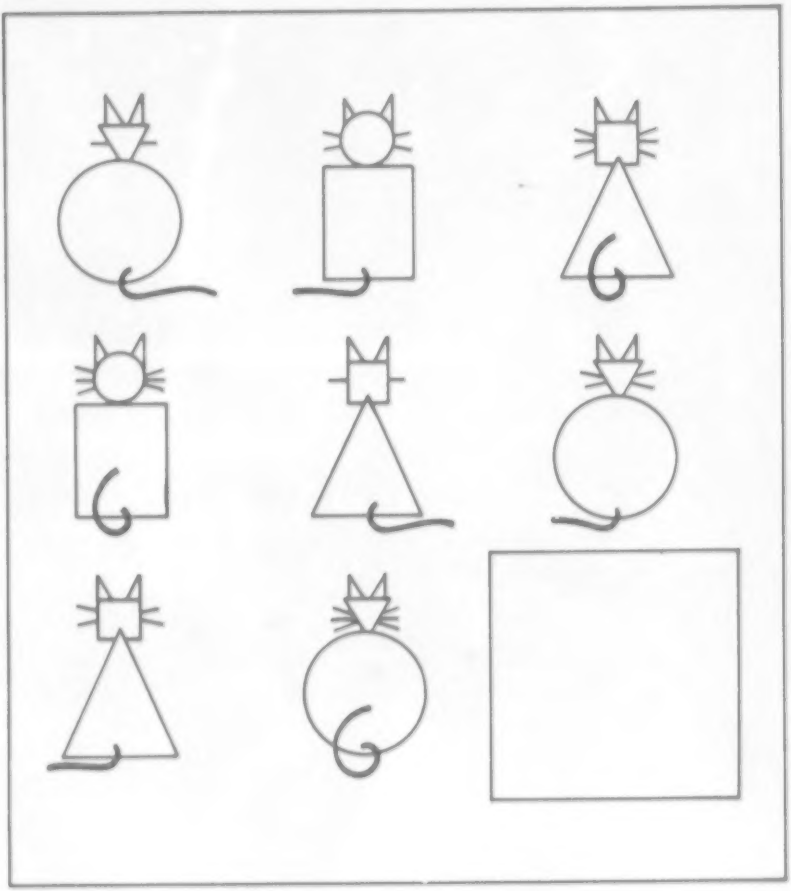
C. To show that you understand the purpose of this exercise, write a comparison/contrast paragraph indicating the relationship between your first paragraph and your second paragraph.

Summary

While stimulating disciplined writing, these exercises move the student from personal-experience writing to objective-analysis writing. Despite the demands of discipline and structure, the students feel relatively comfortable since the exercises are nonthreatening and since they allow options, thus affording freedom within a framework. A further benefit can be claimed if the students voluntarily read their responses aloud. By sharing their ideas, students learn that doing objective analysis does not mean finding an absolute answer in a Platonic sense; instead, it means connecting details within a frame of reference in such a manner that one offends neither deductive nor inductive reasoning. Finally, of course, after working with such exercises, students should be ready to analyze, and to write about, increasingly difficult selections from fiction and non-fiction.

1. This exercise is an adaptation of an exercise found in *Teacher's Guide: Man's Search for Identity* (White Plains, New York: The Center for Humanities, 1972), p. 30. No author given.

Figure 1



Visual Problem Solving: Draw the Missing Cat

Look at the cats in the illustration below. Then draw the missing cat. Explain on a separate piece of paper how you arrived at this design.

CHAPTER III

Targeting Specific Students

English as a Second Language: Tactics for Teaching Composition to College-Level Non-Native Students

SHARON SCULL

Many community colleges offer transfer level courses in English as a Second Language for high-intermediate and advanced students. These students are expected to write compositions ranging from 300–500 words weekly and to integrate into the regular Freshman English program by the time they have completed the advanced course. Many non-native students are well educated, speak several languages, and intend to transfer to a four-year university, so they are definitely not "remedial" students. They are highly motivated, and many have extremely sophisticated ideas but are unable to express themselves clearly in English. Even though this causes them considerable frustration, most students are anxious to improve and willing to rewrite.

This paper describes techniques designed to heighten student performance and lessen marking of papers—techniques both student-centered and teacher-centered. Most importantly they draw on student strengths while taking into consideration cultural and linguistic differences that often impede progress. The cultural differences often lie in the affective realm; i.e., students trained in their own countries to respond to classroom situations according to rigid rules become confused, and sometimes hostile, when the American classroom deviates from the familiar expected patterns. The linguistic differences create problems of a somewhat different sort. Most students' problems with spelling, punctuation and grammar occur because they try to apply native language rules to the second language. Clearly, instructors aware of patterns of both cultural and linguistic variations will be in a better position to know how and what to teach. (See appendix A for a comparative analysis of typical ESL writing abilities.)

Techniques For Teaching Composition

The in-class tutorial method of teaching writing to high-level ESL students has been successful at Glendale College. The system

relies heavily on the assistance of tutors in the classroom. (See instructions for tutors, appendix B.) If the instructor has the help of two tutors, the students receive a great deal of individual attention. If no tutors are available, the system still works; however, the instructor must limit the time spent with each student and focus on only one problem area per class period.

Multi-Draft, In-Class Writing

High-intermediate and advanced ESL composition students profit most when they write a series of drafts in the classroom—without the use of books or notes (except dictionaries). Why in-class writing only? Because education in foreign cultures is heavily based on memorization and recitation, and students are more likely to plagiarize. It is common for students to simply reproduce a piece of writing, from the class text or from a friend's composition, without realizing they are doing anything dishonest. Further, because most students have had little experience with original writing, they are sorely lacking in logical, creative thinking and in critical analysis. This is why the multi-draft system is so important. Students must be guided from draft to draft until they are comfortable with offering their own thesis, discussion, examples and concluding judgment.

From First To Final Draft: Sure Signs of Progress

The following represents a typical progression for the ESL student. The first draft contains little more original writing than a sentence outline. All the examples appear to be copied directly from the book but are, in fact, memorized. The general effect is one of *déjà vu*. Convincing non-native students to write brief examples in their own words and discuss them is one of the hardest tasks for the instructor. For example, in James Thurber's "The Unicorn in the Garden" (in the popular ESL reader, *20th Century American Short Stories*, by Jean A. McConochie), students might be asked to discuss the relationship between the husband and wife. In the first draft, they can't leave the expression "booby hatch" alone, often repeating it several times throughout the paper as evidence that they have mastered this strange, but unfortunately outdated, idiom. They almost always say that the wife was taken to the booby hatch because the husband tricked her and that she deserved it. They see only the immediate cause and effect. In the second draft, students begin to analyze the relationship and give details, mentioning that the husband has to prepare his own breakfast while the wife shouts at him from her bed, that he has to tiptoe around the darkened house in order not to disturb her, that he is gentle with the unicorn, and that he is sneaky because he lies to the psychiatrist about seeing the unicorn. In the final draft, students begin to discuss the "why" of the relation-

ship. They are often quite logical, explaining the underlying causes of the couple's dislike for each other, examining the characters as caricatures, and evaluating the biased point of view of the story. Each of these stages requires a great deal of interaction between the instructor or tutor and the student during the writing process in the classroom.

Nitty-Gritty Mechanics

Papers that are written over two, three, or four class periods are collected at the end of each hour for "safekeeping," and returned *unread* for the student to complete. On the final paper, instructors mark but *never correct* errors—unless there is absolutely no clear way to identify them. At the beginning of the semester, students receive very exact notations of errors (see appendix C); after midterm, they are more generally identified, often by underlining with no notation. Because students make the same kinds of mistakes repeatedly, by this time they can usually make corrections without further explanation.

Credit is given for participation in each writing activity, whether a paper is graded or not. For a five-hour per week class, students spend two hours working on a composition. The writing can be multi-stage papers, correction of returned essays, proofreading exercises, or other related activities. Typically, eight to ten essays, including mid-term and final examinations, are marked and graded by the instructor during the course of the semester. Marking of papers is minimized if done during class because verbal explanations are given. Students must correct graded papers and discuss the changes with the instructor or a tutor to earn credit for writing that day. A zero is recorded for those who don't participate, and all zeros are deducted from the final grade. A very workable system for grading is to use the first half of the semester as practice, with only zeros counting against the student, but no penalty for poor letter grades. After midterm, all grades count toward the final grade, and most essays are done in one class period on unannounced topics although students are given a general idea of what to prepare.

A Place for Groupwork, Films, and Texts

Students enjoy working in groups and pairs, and proofreading exercises (see appendix D) are excellent for teaching them to edit by reading aloud. This method can demonstrate comma splices, fragments, and run-on sentences more graphically than silent reading. An important part of this exercise requires the instructor to read the material aloud *exactly* as punctuated. The instructor asks the students to stop him whenever there is an error and to identify the mistake. Of course, the material sounds much like computer synthesized speech, and even the students who couldn't find the errors independently recognize that something is wrong.

A useful group exercise for teaching classification and focusing is the group paper, done for credit, but no grade. Students are divided into groups of four or five (always students who speak different languages and who have varied writing abilities) and asked to select a single thesis that they can support. This forces them to speak and think in English. Often they have a difficult time agreeing on a common subject, but they have to write a paper together, or they get no individual credit for the project. During the discussion and writing, the instructor and tutors circulate in the classroom to confer with each group, drawing out the shy and weak students. Usually the group elects a strong student to write the paper, but all the members contribute information, and all proofread it before it is turned in. The project takes two or three class periods. The instructor reads the papers aloud to the entire class. Usually, one paper is selected by the class as the best. After the paper is marked, each group makes the necessary corrections. In a sense, the project is a non-threatening contest; however, the students are bound more closely together by teamwork.

Short films are very useful to stimulate classroom discussion, further explain reading assignments, and provide material for written analyses. *One Eyed Men Are Kings*, an Academy Award winning film, is a winner in the classroom, too, and is always the basis for thoughtful discussion and writing. In addition, the animated film of *A Unicorn in the Garden* is an excellent companion to the story. At all levels of ESL, nonverbal films are best for two reasons: first, the students don't have to worry about understanding rapid dialogue or a difficult vocabulary; second, students are forced to use their own words to discuss the film. A list of useful films and their appropriate levels is given in appendix E. The most effective films are short, under 15 minutes. This enables the instructor to show the movie twice in a single class period and to have a brief discussion in between. A second showing sharply decreases the need for additional explanation.

At the high-intermediate and advanced levels, most instructors use both reading and writing texts. The reader often combines biography, short stories, and essays that provide material for discussion and analysis. The writing text explains rhetorical modes, gives practical suggestions for writing, and includes some grammar exercises. Classroom discussions center on the reading assignments, and are liberally sprinkled with cultural information, idiomatic usage, and grammar. Since texts in other disciplines are expository and often quite technical, the reader gives the students a taste of literature. Students also love to read passages of dialogue aloud. Often that dramatic touch provides the immediacy and involvement needed for understanding.

In choosing non-fiction, instructors often select readings about social habits of Americans. Although they are sometimes ignorant of their classmates' cultural patterns, most of the students are fascinated

by American customs. For example, they are curious about our courtship, marriage, and divorce practices.

Students are also interested in the histories of our holidays. Newspaper articles abound prior to each one, and these can be reproduced and used as the basis for classroom discussion. And all these discussions, of course, should be ultimately directed toward building vocabulary and improving writing.

Leading to the Research Paper

At the most advanced level of ESL, students are introduced to library research techniques to reduce plagiarism and to aid those who have to write term papers prior to completion of Freshman English, where the research paper is taught. Students learn to prepare a simple bibliography and note cards. The culmination of the project is an essay written in class without books or notes (except dictionaries). Since these students are adept at memorization, they remember most of the important facts. They must take some position about the information they have learned. This essay can be used to reinforce the students' understanding of argument. The task can be made more interesting by assigning students to do research in pairs with each student taking an opposing side of the argument. Students select an issue that interests them, but the instructor must approve each topic before the team begins its research. Sample topics are current issues dealing with customs, culture, politics, or social behavior in the United States. This project takes about a week. At least two class periods are spent in the library with the instructor and tutors helping students find material. No other homework is assigned during this time so students are expected to locate two or three sources (minimum) and prepare their bibliographies and basic arguments outside class. Credit or no credit is given for the short bibliography exercise. Then, two practice writing workshops are held immediately preceding the in-class essay. Only the final essay is graded.

A Doublecheck for Assessment

An additional way of testing writing ability is that of having all low-intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced ESL students write a theme on the same topic. Papers from all levels and all classes are then mixed together and divided into sets, each of which is evaluated by two instructors. The purpose of the project is to standardize grading and compare ability levels. The best time for this essay is about three to four weeks before classes end. Instructors can use the results to support their own evaluations of students. (See Appendix F p. 110.)

Concluding Remarks

In summary, the major goals of ESL composition classes at the college level are to teach students critical thinking and to break them of the habit of parroting what they have memorized or copied. In addition, they should learn to organize their ideas, defend a thesis, and reach conclusions. They should also try to improve deficiencies in idiomatic usage, grammar, and syntax. However, it is unrealistic for us to expect these students to write like natives after one or two semesters of concentrated instruction in composition. Some of them, regardless of the sophistication of their ideas, will always exhibit foreign elements in their writing. But if we don't expect miracles, we certainly will not attain them. In teaching non-native students, an optimistic attitude is nearly as important as skill, and a combination of the two can sometimes produce dramatic results.

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Appendix A

A Comparative Analysis of Typical ESL Writing Abilities

Language	Spelling	Sentence Structure	Essay Development
Japanese	Good, except confusion of "r" and "l"	Short, abrupt; some C.S., Frag.	Usually logical but often only a paragraph. Little discussion of examples.
Chinese	Good, except confusion of "r" and "l"	Mainland (PRC): Good. Other: Good to poor. C.S., Frag., R.O., rep.	PRC: Clear, logical; shows vocabulary growth. Other: Good but often wordy with rep. of ideas.
Korean	Good to fair	Sometimes lack clarity. Weak syntax.	Often skeletal. No discussion of examples. Sometimes only a paragraph.
Thai/ Indonesian	Many errors	Syntax weak. C.S., R.O., Frag. Wordy.	Content often skimpy. Too few examples.
Vietnamese (Fr. educ.)	Confusion with Fr. rules; final "e"; ex. "probleme"	Sometimes wordy. Frag., C.S.	Good use of examples; clear discussion.
Vietnamese (non-Fr. educ.)	Often poor (Some not literate in VN)	Confused syntax; sometimes incoherent. R.O., C.S., Frag.	Often minimal. Little discussion. Sometimes not on subject.
African (Br. educ.)	Good to poor	Often excellent. Some R.O., C.S., Frag.	Some have very good. Some have too little discussion.
Spanish	Fair; major confusion between Sp. and Engl. vowels ("i," "e," "a") and consonants ("j," "h," "ll," "y," "v," "b")	Long and rambling. Many diversions. R.O., C.S., Frag.	Good to weak. Weak students have difficulty with example, wordiness.
Middle Eastern (Fr. educ.)	Good. Fr. spelling rules often applied.	Wordy and repetitious. Frag., C.S.	Discussion adequate. Papers sometimes fail to make a point.
Middle Eastern (non-Fr. educ.)	Poor. Addition of extra vowels; no concept of spelling rules.	Long, rambling sentences. Much repetition of key words and ideas. Syntax often confused. (Instructor can edit by deletion.)	Much retelling and repetition. Too few examples. Little real discussion.

Grammatical Problems	Idiomatic Usage	Miscellaneous
Articles (none in Japanese). Confused about prepositions; ex. "tell to" + obj. "ask to" + obj. S-V agr., verb tenses	Weak	Speech poor; no practice while learning English.
Articles, prepositions, S-V agreement, verb tenses	PRC: fair HK: good Taiwan: fair	Speech good. PRC: clipped; American accent.
Articles, prepositions, S-V agr., verb tenses	Weak	Speech often good.
Articles, prepositions, verb tenses, adj. placement, personal pronouns	Fair	Speech often good.
Articles, preposition , verb tenses, adj. placer ent	Good	Speech fairly clear.
Articles, prepositions, S-V agr., verb tenses, ref.	Poor	Speech sometimes unintelligible; d + vowel th + vowel s, sh. Need reading instruction.
S-V agr.	Good to Excellent	Excellent Br. speech.
Articles (improperly used according to Spanish rules); prepositions (many Sp. verbs followed by "to"; e.g., *telefonear a una persona* for *to telephone a person*) Adjectives in Engl. do not agree in number and gender and don't follow noun.	Fair	Speech good.
S-V agr., articles, prepositions, verb tenses	Fair to good	Speech good. ("w" and "v" confused).
S-V agr., articles, prepositions, pronouns, verb tenses	Poor	Speech good. Handwriting terrible. No concept of upper and lower case or proper formation of cursive letters.

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Appendix B

Instructions for ESL Tutors

The functions of in-class tutors are (1) to assist students during the writing workshops, and (2) to help students who have had difficulty with the reading assignments or exercises. Tutors may wish to work independently with individual students in the tutorial center. These sessions should be arranged privately in accordance with any limitation of hours.

Here are some special points to remember:

1. You are not expected to replace the instructor. If you have a problem helping a student, simply tell him or her that you don't know the answer and will have to ask the instructor for help.
2. Do not write anything on the students' papers. Don't even carry a pen or pencil with you when you circulate among the students.
3. Do not make corrections for the students. Identify problems in their writing and guide them in correcting their own work. A major goal of the in-class tutorial method is to enable students to identify and correct their own mistakes. At first, you will have to be very specific with your help. Later, students will become less and less dependent on you for basic problems and you will probably serve more as a critic. Be sure to praise students when they write something especially interesting or clever.
4. Work with different students each class period. Don't permit individual students to become too dependent on you, and don't allow the same student to sit beside you each time. You can control this by sitting in different locations or by circulating among the students.
5. If you find a student copying a paper written at home, remind him or her that all papers submitted for a grade must be written in class. Then suggest that he or she carefully read through the paper before putting it away. Often a recreated paper is better than the original.
6. Every student must be seen during each class, no matter how briefly. Watch the time. Don't spend too long with any one student. After everyone has been seen, students may have additional help.
7. Please inform the instructor immediately of any problems that you encounter.
8. Please keep your time sheet accurately. Be sure to have students sign the sheet during the month and to have it approved by the instructor.

Appendix C

Symbols Used in Marking Papers

1. frag. *sentence fragment*
   Examples: Because she ate so much chocolate. (introductory clause)
   She from Peru. (no verb)
   And sat down quickly. (no subject)

2. R.O. *run-on sentence*
   Example: My mother likes cake my father likes pie. (two sentences)

3. C.S. *comma splice*
   Examples: John loves horses, he rides well. (two sentences)
   Bill likes Mary, George likes Jane, Sam likes Betty. (three sentences or a series using "and" after the second comma)

4. sp. *spelling error*

5. p. *punctuation error*
Example: Do you often eat ice cream. (should end with a question mark)

6. agr. *lack of subject-verb agreement*
Examples: Everyone were here Saturday night. ("everyone" is singular)
They was usually late for class. ("they" is plural)

7. gr. *faulty grammar*, usually itemized as follows:
adj. use adjective
adv. use adverb
art. article needed (a, an, the)
prep. preposition needed
pro. pronoun needed
pl. use plural
sing. use singular
etc.

8. *omission*
Example: When I saw that my brothers, I laughed.

9. WW *wrong word*
Example: Bill came on the *seen* to *except* the award.

10. BW *better word* needed (the word is technically correct, but a native speaker would not use it)

11. OW *own words* should be used (don't copy from the text unless you quote)

12. dangl. *dangling construction*
Example: He broke the window with his sister.

13. rep. *repetition*
Example: They liked to spend Sundays together, they often played tennis together, and they went together to the movies.

14. || *lack of parallelism*
Example: They liked swimming, to hike, and riding in a boat.

15. awk. awkward

16. ref. *faulty pronoun reference* (antecedent not clear)
Example: Everyone brought their sister. (everyone is singular)

17. ¶ *new paragraph needed*

18. no ¶ *no new paragraph needed*

19. cl. *lack of clarity* (not clear)

20. syl. *wrong syllabication* (incorrect word division)
Example: mothe-r (divide between syllables: moth-er)
Tues-day (don't divide proper names: Tuesday)

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21. trans. *lack of transition* (transitions are "bridges" between paragraphs)

22. t. *incorrect tense*

23. t. shift *tense shift*

Directions for writing papers:

Use 8½ x 11 college ruled paper. Please don't use spiral-bound or odd-size notebook paper. Leave a left margin. Write on every other line. Use only one side of the paper. Always write in blue or black ink. Double space typed papers. Write legibly. Make corrections nearly above the line. Do not recopy when writing in class.

Appendix D

Proofreading Exercise

Identify errors in sentence structure by writing C.S. (comma splice), R.O. (run-on sentence), or Frag. (sentence fragment) above the error. Correct the punctuation so that the sentences are correct. There are 15 errors, five of each type.

No Passport Needed

International Day at Glendale College is always exciting, all the students participate fully, everyone looks forward to the food and entertainment. Because students carefully plan well in advance. The hour from 11 to 12 is packed with activities. All the action is found in the patio area near the bookstore.

Tables are set up all around the perimeter of the patio students sell homemade foods. Most of which are favorite national dishes. Students and faculty can't wait to buy their lunches at this "International Bazaar" they can select meat, vegetable, and rice dishes from the Middle East or attractively rolled and shaped meat and noodle dishes from the Orient, there is even an Armenian meat pastry that resembles a pizza. Special salads combine tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers, pilaf, and spices. The desserts, of course, are heavenly there are big, puffy pastries that look as if they have been dusted with powdered sugar by the gods, there is baklava, simultaneously crunchy and gooey, bulging with pistachio nuts and honey sandwiched between paper-thin layers of flaky pastry. There are pretty, sweet bean cakes and magical fortune cookies. There is something for everyone to sample.

About half past eleven, the music becomes louder the students then begin to do native folk dances and demonstrate special skills. Often students wear colorful national costumes, sometimes there is a martial arts demonstration once there was a special lion dance done by two young men whose faces were never seen. Because neither ever removed his half of the huge lion costume. Sometimes students invite members of the audience to join the dancing. The hillside in front of the library is jammed with onlookers. All cheering and clapping wildly.

International Day is very popular at the college. Because it enriches our lives with customs and culture from many, many lands. It gives us a chance to sample life abroad, to visit with people of other countries, and to taste exotic foreign foods, all without leaving the campus.

Appendix E

Suggested Short Films

One Eyed Men Are Kings (CRM/McGraw Hill Films)—Advanced.

This non-verbal Academy Award winning film is set in Paris. A lonely, fiftyish bachelor lives under the domination of his elderly mother and her spoiled little dog. One day, while walking the dog, the man decides to masquerade as a blind man. As a result, he becomes the center of attention of a sympathetic group of friends in the park. Unfortunately, when his deception is discovered, he becomes lonelier than ever.

(15 minutes, color)

A Unicorn In The Garden (McGraw Hill Films/available through University of Illinois) —Advanced.

This is an excellent animated version of Thurber's fable about the nagging wife who wants to get rid of her husband but eventually is sent off to a mental institution instead. The facial expressions are exaggeratedly wicked and benign, and the film makes good use of light and darkness to enhance the meaning.

That's Me (CRM/McGraw Hill Films)—Intermediate, Advanced.

In this film, Alan Arkin plays a young Puerto Rican who is having trouble adjusting to life in New York City. When a social worker tries to help the young man decide whether he should go to work, go back to school, or sit in the park and play his guitar, the social worker gains some interesting insights into his own values.

(15 minutes, black and white)

The American Spectacle (CRM/McGraw Hill Films)—Intermediate, Advanced.

The film illustrates the natural wonders of America, from Cape Cod to Hawaii, and includes some spectacular footage of deserts, waterfalls, volcanos, glaciers, etc. Van Heflin narrates.

(34 minutes, color)

The Sculptress of Policka (CRM/McGraw Hill Films)—Advanced (Adult).

The puppet cast of the film engages in a bit of naughty frolicking when a sculptor and his wife decide to trick a cleric who has been making surreptitious advances to the sculptor's wife. A tryst between the wife and the cleric is arranged. While the husband is chasing the cleric, the wife dallies with the husband's assistant (which is what she had in mind all the time).

(13 minutes, color)

Island of Dreams: A Fable For Our Time (Texture Films, Inc.)—Intermediate.

A factory worker leaves the crowds, pollution, and mechanization of city life and moves to a deserted island. At first, he is delighted with his primitive surroundings. Soon, however, he begins to make improvements in his living and working conditions. At last, he has transformed the island into the same kind of nightmare that he fled.

(8 minutes, color)

Job Interview: I Guess I Got The Job (CRM/McGraw Hill Films)—Intermediate, Advanced.

Two young men are interviewed for identical positions. One is brash and confident. The other is hesitant and unsure. After the interview, they get together to discuss their prospects. Through flashbacks, the interviewer's impression of each is shown.

(13 minutes, color)

The American Parade: We The Women (BFA Educational Media)—Advanced.

The film analyzes the causes of increasing feminism in America, discusses the effects of the industrial revolution, Civil War, and World Wars I and II on the women's movement. Successes and failures of the women's movement are presented. (Women's equality is a very interesting topic for ESL classes.)

(29 minutes)

Appendix F

Instructions For Cooperative ESL Essay

1. The essay is written each semester by all students at the low-intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced ESL levels in both day and evening classes. The date is announced well in advance. Students are informed that the essay is mandatory, that there are *no makeups* and that the papers will be evaluated by two other instructors as well as the "home" instructor.
2. Students may use dictionaries, but no other books, notes, or papers are permitted. Instructors and tutors give no help except occasional spelling of words. Paper is provided, but students bring pens. Instructors stress that students must write legibly in ink, preferably on every other line of the paper.
3. All classes write for 40 minutes on the same topic, but students are not advised of this in advance.
4. On the day of the essay, instructors make sure students understand the instructions and fill out identification cards correctly. Names are not written on the papers, but on the cards which are clipped to the completed essays. (A sample essay topic/instruction sheet is attached.) At the end of the examination period, all essay topic sheets must be returned to the instructor.
5. All test materials are turned in by a specified deadline in order to facilitate intermingling of day and evening papers and dividing them into sets.

6. An automatic numbering machine is used to number each paper and its identifying card. Individual classes are numbered consecutively to speed the process of returning the papers at the end of the project. Cards and papers are then separated. Cards are kept in numerical order. Papers are dealt out like cards into the appropriate number of sets of about 25 each. Each set is placed in an envelope with the names of the set partners written on the front.

7. Instructors are advised when sets are ready for scoring. Each set takes about 30 minutes to read, and each is read by two instructors. Part-time faculty read the number of sets equivalent to the number of ESL classes they teach. Full-time faculty read the rest. Set partners are usually chosen randomly unless one person specifically asks to read with another for comparative purposes. No marks are made on the papers; instead, instructors score each essay, identified by number only, on a separate scoring sheet. Each completed set is returned to a central point where the first reader's scores are removed and a fresh scoring sheet is attached for the second reader. This process usually takes about a week.

8. When all the essays are in, scores are marked on the 3 x 5 cards just prior to their return to the "home" instructors. Papers are returned prior to the final examination period. Essays are not returned to students; however, they are given the cards with the scores marked on them and they are encouraged to discuss their papers with the instructors.

9. Papers are scored on organization of presentation, syntax, grammar, and usage. The following scoring system is used (pluses and minuses are acceptable):

Score	Student should enroll next semester in	Student has all or some of these problems
0	Adult Education ESL	Simple sentence; basic verb tenses
1	Low-intermediate ESL	Simple paragraph development; serious problems with compound/complex sentences, syntax, grammar, usage
2	High-intermediate ESL	Paragraphing and development of short theme; compound/complex sentences, syntax, prepositions, articles, verb tenses, pronoun reference
3	Advanced ESL	Essay development; minor problems with syntax, compound/complex sentences, idiomatic usage
4	Remedial English	Non-ESL problems (R.O., C.S., frag.); essay development.
5	Freshman English	Very minor problems with organization, development, grammar, and content.

ESL Cooperative Essay

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Do not write your name on the examination paper.
2. Complete the 3 x 5 card with the following information:
   a. Name
   b. Name of Instructor
   c. Class level
   d. Class hour

Example:

Phuong, Phat

Mrs. Doe
English 165
9–10

ESSAY TOPIC:

Write for 40 minutes on the following:

How is your life today different from that of your mother or father (or other relative of their generation) when he or she was your age? Begin with a statement that answers the question. Then give examples or details from your personal experience. At the end, decide whether your life is better or worse than that of your relative.

RETURN THIS SHEET TO YOUR INSTRUCTOR.

The Transfer Student:

Composition Placement Procedures for UCLA with Sample Student Essays

Defining and Teaching University Discourse: Mike Rose's Program

Composition Placement Procedures for UCLA with Sample Student Essays

SUBJECT A OFFICE

Each year approximately 2,800 in-coming students take the composition placement—or "Subject A"—exam at UCLA. Two university instructors read each essay holistically (general impression) and assign a score of 1-6 based on the rating scale (appendix A). Students who average "3" or below enter one of the preparatory levels (English A, the lower level, or English 1, the upper level); students who average "4" or above enter English 3, the required college level composition course. Community college instructors should find the rating scale helpful in determining whether transfer students (1) are eligible for an advanced composition course (if they place "6"), (2) are prepared for the full-credit regular freshman composition course (if they place "4" or "5"), or (3) are in need of developmental/remedial writing (if they place "1," "2," "3").

Students have three hours to write two compositions. One essay—to be written in an hour—responds to a short, usually personal topic. The second essay responds to a reading passage. This second essay, allotted two hours, allows for more objective, analytic writing. We include here an example only of the shorter, one-hour essay. The following represents the actual directions all students receive, along with one of the topics students have been asked to write about.

> DIRECTIONS: You will have 60 minutes to plan and write the essay of about 350 words. Before you begin writing, consider the topic carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it. Be sure to use specific details to support your ideas. Give your paper a title. Write in ink.
>
> TOPIC: Consider the effects of television on literacy, *or* family life, *or* social behavior. Write an essay in which you analyze these effects and argue that they have been essentially either beneficial or harmful.

Certainly students taking the exam are writing under "test conditions"—and certainly most would do better given more time,

the benefit of pre-writing exercises, the opportunity to get responses from others and revise their writing. Thus, the purpose of the exam must be kept in mind: it is an effective way of placing students in composition courses; it does not purport to be a pedagogy.

The exams that follow are transcribed versions of students' essays which span the full 1 through 6 range. Teachers might try their own holistic scorings for these essays before turning to appendix A, where they will find the University's scores.

Readin' Books Ain't Cool

The invention of the television is probably one of the greatest advances in communication the world will ever know. It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Communication is so much easier now that we can turn a complicated description of an event into a few simple pictures. But perhaps it's too easy. Maybe the temptation to avoid the struggle of selecting words is too great. The literacy of our society is shrivelling up because of television.

I am the first to admit that television has its uses. But entertainment really shouldn't be one. From what my parents have told me, before television was invented, if they wanted to hear a good story, they would read it in a book. It might take several days to finish the story, but it just made it more suspense-filled. Besides, reading by flashlight after your parents have told you to go to bed is exciting in itself. The important thing is that they were constantly exposed to proper English. They could recognize it with their eyes and hear it in their minds. Any English teacher will admit that the way to learn grammar is not to memorize rules, but to memorize what it sounds like. If you do that, you will naturally talk and write in proper English. But now that it's so easy to flip on the television set, few people spend more time reading than watching soap operas, game shows, and *I Love Lucy* reruns. Students learn more and more grammar by studying rules now.

Someone in the television industry might argue that you can learn correct English just as well by hearing it on television as by reading it in a book. I would agree with that argument readily. But how many television characters use correct English? The answer is, "Not very many." What is more important, however, is how many characters who *do* use correct English are appealing to the audience? The answer here is, "Even less." This might not be important to an adult whose values are fairly well determined. But to a child who is searching for someone to look up to, it is. If they admire some character like Fonzie from "Happy Days," they will do their best to imitate the way he talks. I think very few people would argue that Fonzie uses correct English. But Fonzie is very easy for people to relate to—much easier than characters in books that you can't even see. So children will continue to learn to talk like him.

A solution to our literacy problem might be to make all characters speak correctly. But ratings would drop because characters who speak in slang or act stupid are more appealing. Another solution might be to cut out the use of television for entertainment. This again would be impractical because providing entertainment is its chief purpose. The solution has to lie with the individual. He must decide whether to use or abuse his time watching television. In the case of young children, the parents should be aware of what they watch, perhaps setting a limit on the amount of time spent in front of the television. If we don't learn to watch less television and read more books, television might become the greatest invention toward ending communication.

Lack of Exercise

In today's world people are lacking in exercise because of television. The average person watches twenty hours of television a week, thus causing less physical activity, more heart attacks, more people overweight, and soaring medical costs. Television is ruining the lives of many people.

Before television people were more physically active than today. People would come home from work or school, instead of doing some physical exercise, they would just sink into a chair and watch television for hours, also on weekends when they could be doing some exercises, they would turn on the television and watch it for the rest of the day.

Television is causing more heart attacks and more overweight people. When a person is inactive for a lengthy period of time, then they try to play a strenuous sport, they suffer a heart attack. A person who watches television tends to burn up less calories than an active person, thus causing more weight, also a person who watches television tends to eat more than an active person adding even more pounds causing overweight people.

With more and more people watching television, there are more heart attacks and overweight people thus causes higher medical costs. When more go to the hospital with heart attacks caused by obesity their insurance company pays for it, in turn all the medical insurance rates go up thus causing higher medical expenses.

People are having less physical activity; more heart attacks, more people overweight, and higher medical costs because the average person watches twenty hours of television a week. Because of television in today's world, people are lacking in exercise.

Television: Its Effects as an Abused Tool

Television has been misused by the public and consequently has affected the literacy of its viewers. Its effect has been unfavorable to

this point, for its viewers have become dependent and learned to believe television as a major form of literary art. Unfortunately, television does not teach reading, spelling, and writing.

Adults are watching the brief reports of television news programs instead of reading more detailed reports in newspapers and magazines. They are inclined to be swayed easily by the media simply because television is the most powerful because of its visual attractiveness. This dependency on the visual media sets a poor example for children in the process of learning to read and write.

Children have been abused by this practice. Most certainly, they have been affected more significantly. There is very little encouragement to learn to read and write, and it is naturally easier to just watch something rather than to read. Television does not present a need for such skills to them.

The "tube" is the major cause for the lower reading levels of American children. They are not reading as many books. Before the invention of the television, reading was a major form of entertainment; now it is practically obsolete among children. Television is also believed to be the major distraction from homework; again, the children miss chances to learn to read. With the ability to read comes naturally the ability to spell and write; hence all three skills fall victim to the abuse of television.

Children also have learned to believe that television is a major form of art. Unfortunately, television is geared towards satisfying and, pleasing the audience rather than presenting an idea or theme on human nature or provoking thoughts on such profound subjects as does literature. The young viewers are exposed to an implied importance on visual stimulation as opposed to the thoughtful.

This abuse of television is a problem now becoming a major concern of parents and teachers. The public is more aware of its useful and harmful aspects. Although up to this point the effects of television have been harmful by lowering the literacy of its society, it may prove to be more helpful to increase the literacy and awareness of its viewers. The public is learning to use it to its advantage.

Literacy and Television

Of all of mans' inventions, television has had one of the most profound and devastating effects upon student literacy. Test scores nationwide have dropped, and more and more colleges must administer a minimum English-vocabulary test. People today do not go to books for their knowledge, they merely flick a switch and sit idly as their literacy and vocabulary become worse. A dramatic change in the value of knowledge and literacy would be necessary to change the national trend.

The first to see the effects of television on literacy are the colleges and universities. Verbal test scores have been declining significantly for the past several years and continue to do so. Many classic books

that were considered an intrinsic part of the students curriculum are practically ignored today. The harm that this has caused is indicated by the declining literacy awareness of today's student.

Another group that feels the continuing effects of television is the English teacher of American high schools. A greater part of their time must be spent in teaching basic reading and vocabulary skills. This increased time spent in the basic skills robs from the subject time to teach the more important aspects of literature. More importantly, it robs the student of the very reason for his English education: to expand his literary knowledge.

A final group of people to feel the damaging effects of television are the parents. Millions of tax dollars are spent in teaching many of the basics which should have been learned by reading. Not only must parents cope with an increased burden, but they must wrangle with the problems of declining test scores as well as the teachers. Televisions effect on literacy is a truly widespread and serious problem.

Television today has had a tremendous effect upon American literacy. Declining test scores, more frequent competency tests and increased school time spent on the basics are all harmful side-effects caused by television. Only with more emphasis on the value of literacy achievement and vocabulary skills can the national trend toward television be changed.

Television—Is it really worthwhile

Within the last few years the quality of television has been steadily going down hill. The old-time shows which used to air on television were very highly enjoyable for the young as well as the old. Now most of the programs which are aimed on public television are so full of both sex and violence, that I feel that they have little or no significance for any age group.

The contents of television programs have a great affect on social behavior. Many cases have shown people to be insensitive to certain problems due to television. For example, a person who constantly watches violent shows, and is constantly seeing people being murdered on T.V. may and most probably would not be as sensitive to an actual death as a person who very rarely sees people being killed. Television has a great effect among the behavior of kids. Many kids shows being aired on Television portray very violent ideas. Take for example some of the cartoons now being shown on T.V. For example, The Road Runner cartoon is a very violent prone show. Throughout the whole sequence the animals as well as the people on the show are being very badly injured. I have personally observed my five year old cousin while he was watching cartoons such as the Road Runner. It was really not surprising to me to see my cousin laugh every time one of the characters either got blown up or mutilated. It

just shows that if kids are constantly subjected to shows such as these, some of them are going to be less sensitive to actual tragedies.

I personally feel that television has been greatly harmful to both the young as well as the old. Sex has also been an increasingly important aspect of many of the programs today. I feel alot of this sex now being shown on T.V. is only further corrupting the minds of the young, and is unnecessary in the production of T.V. programs. All I have to say is if T.V. doesn't improve quickly were all going to be in trouble.

A Harmful Screen

Television is harmful to people. It not only leads the young kids to misdemeanor, but the radiation is also harmful to their eyes. The shows on the television affect the behavior of a person. Some of those foul language being used in television has a great effect on the younger generation. Television can affect a lot of people's life.

A young kid can be doing something stupid because it was shown on television. Young kids take television shows as an example of doing things. They might mischoosed the shows and do something crazy. They need considerable people to help them select suitable shows for them. They need others to watch them, so they will not be harmed by television shows. Therefore, choosing a right show for a young kid is very important in their life. Besides these television produces a lot of radiation which is harmful to their eyes. With this big factor, that's why there is more people who is wearing glasses than before television is manufactured.

Some people watch a violent show, and learn all the technique inside the show. They use these things to survive in the environment. These things they do will have great factor to the social peacefulness. People might even put themselves into the situation of the show and kill other people. These common error make by the people will surely affect their later life.

Foul languages being used in violent shows give great example to young kids. They will learn it by heart because the show will be put on for several times. These language will affect the level of literacy in the society.

These effects to the people will lower the standard of the people. People like to live in a evilness and pure environment. If there is so much bad effect by the television, we should rather exclus it from our life, especially from the younger generation.

Appendix A

Rating Scale

6 — Applies to superior papers which do everything well, which are written with some distinction, and which are free of serious writing errors.

5 — Applies to papers that are clear passes. A 5 paper does most or all of the following well:

— responds to the theme topic, although it may not follow all of the instructions. It probably organizes ideas in several paragraphs, has an orderly progression from one idea to another, and has some sense of closure;
— employs precise vocabulary;
— varies sentence structure, capitalization, punctuation, and/or usage.

4— Applies to papers which are weak passes because they may be deficient in one or more characteristics of an excellent paper. A 4 paper may be described as follows:
— responds to the theme topic, showing some sense of organization but perhaps with some weaknesses in paragraph structuring and/or paragraph development.
— may use fewer details;
— communicates clearly;
— may use less variety in sentence structures;
— may contain some minor errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure, and perhaps one or two more serious errors, such as a run-together sentence, an awkward fragment, a dangling modifier, faulty parallel structure, an agreement problem, or faulty predication.

3 — Applies to unsatisfactory papers which may lack the content and development of 4 papers and which exhibit more serious weaknesses in the writer's ability to handle written English. A 3 paper may be described as follows:
— may fail to respond clearly to the theme topic, even tangentially;
— may have little organization;
— may use illogical arguments or little specific detail;
— may have no variety of sentence structure and several different types of serious sentence errors (parallel structure, agreement, run-togethers, fragments, dangling modifiers), and/or minor punctuation, capitalization, diction, or spelling errors;
— may violate some conventions of written English, but its errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the paper.
— may have bad spelling; misspelling of five or more different common words should fail an otherwise undistinguished paper.

2 — This score may be assigned to papers which are failures. They present some content but compound the weaknesses of a 3 paper. A 2 paper may be described as follows:
— may distort or ignore topic;
— may show little or no development—i.e. lacks specific, related details;
— contains *many* serious sentence errors (fragments, agreement, run-together sentences, modifier, parallelism) and/or *many* minor errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and diction.
— may show bad spelling.

1 — This score applies to papers which have problems so severe and numerous that the student probably will not pass the English 1 course the first time through. Such papers
— may be incoherent, with marked false predication;
— contain not one well developed, reasonably error free paragraph;
— may show very bad spelling.

University Scores for "Effects of Television" essay:

Readin' Books Ain't Cool — 6
Lack of Exercise — 2
Television: Its Effects as an Abused Tool — 4
Literacy and Television — 5
Television—Is it really worthwhile? — 3
A Harmful Screen — 1

Defining and Teaching University Discourse: Mike Rose's Program

FAYE PEITZMAN

In "Teaching University Discourse" (forthcoming), Mike Rose joins Cooper and Odell in questioning whether or not the traditional modes—narration, description, exposition, and argumentation—are valid, useful categories. Rose wanted to answer the question as well as to pose it, and so, using UCLA as a representative academic environment, he surveyed a cross section of faculty and teaching assistants from all the UCLA colleges and professional schools and examined samples of essay assignments and examination questions. His findings:

> With the exception of description and narration assignments in creative writing classes and argumentative/persuasive papers in a small number of speech and political science courses, most assignments and examinations called for exposition (p. 2).

Looking more closely at the assignments he had collected (see appendix A for sample paper and essay exam questions used at UCLA), Rose decided that "exposition" could be subdivided into the following: definition, seriation, classification, summary, compare/contrast, and analysis.

In the university, then, students are most often asked:

1. To define terms and concepts—*definition*.
2. To detail steps in a process, indicating relationships between and among the steps—*seriation*.
3. To sort information into categories—categories which are not necessarily "given" by the teacher, but which they have to determine themselves—*classification*.
4. To summarize different data collections, theories, and reports—*summary*.
5. To present systematically similarities and differences between events and theories—*compare/contrast;* and
6. To break down material into component parts and, often, to use a particular theory or opinion to guide examination—*analysis*.

More specifically, Rose found that students are often asked to sequence steps in lab experiments and then describe the results in detail. Exam questions in art, history, literature, and archeology often take the form of classification tasks: classify particular paintings or poems or artifacts in the appropriate category. History and political science term papers call for summary and synthesis skills. Fields such as comparative politics,cultural anthropology, and literary history necessarily invite compare/contrast studies. And writing tasks in sociology frequently involve analyzing social phenomena from the frame of a particular theory. This is not to suggest, of course, that all writing tasks appear in "pure" forms. While sometimes they do: "Define the elastic rebound theory"; just as often they appear in combination: "Define the notion of the 'American Adam' and discuss *Huckleberry Finn* in the light of the concept."

Teaching University Discourse: From Theoretical Underpinnings to Sample Exercises

Rose draws from cognitive psychology research for his theoretical base. Applying Rumelhart (1977) and Minsky's (1975) notions of how "schemata" or "superframes" help human beings process information, Rose suggests that definition, seriation, classification, summary, compare/contrast, and analysis—as the "basic superframes" of expository writing—necessarily help students in their construction of meaning:

> They are ways of representing knowledge as well as plans to guide the construction of the written products containing that knowledge. And as with any plan/schema/frame they can be taught (p. 8).

To summarize so far, then:

1. The university calls for definable "types" of expository writing.
2. These "types," in addition to being ways of representing knowledge, also represent processing frames.
3. These frames can be taught.

The next logical question: How are students best taught the schemata/frames/strategies that will help them conceptualize and push their thoughts forward in writing? Mike Rose's answer: a multidisciplinary composition curriculum that asks students to read and write the kinds of prose that they will encounter and be asked to produce in the university. The reading will help students internalize stylistic and formal conventions in the social and natural sciences as well as the humanities. The in-class activities will push them to discover strategies for approaching different writing tasks. The writing tasks themselves will be a combination of both "finger exercises,"

smaller tasks that more directly guide students step by step, and larger "real world" tasks for which students can take on greater responsibility in shaping form and content.

Appendix B offers a sample curriculum.*

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Appendix A

Sample Paper and Essay Exam Questions Used at The University of California, Los Angeles

1. Define the Elastic Rebound Theory.
   (Definition. Earth and Space Science 1: Fundamentals of Earth Science)
2. What were the social, political, and intellectual factors that contributed to the outbreak of the French Revolution?
   (Seriation/Classification. History 1-C: Introduction to Western Civilization, part 3)
3. Assess the social, psychological, political, and economic impact of World War I.
   (Summary. History 1-C: Introduction to Western Civilization, part 3)
4. How far were liberalism and nationalism compatible and complementary ideologies, how far were they antagonistic?
   (Compare/Contrast. Political Science 2: World Politics)
5. Describe the differences in the assumptions made in: (a) the evolutionary models of the universe, and (b) the steady-state model of the universe.
   (Compare/Contrast. Astronomy 3: The Nature of the Universe)
6. Explain the comparable positions of peasant and rural proletarian women in the Protestant and Catholic countries or regions in the 16th and 17th centuries, with regard to the following: (1) responsibility for sinfulness; (2) likelihood of being accused of witchcraft; (3) probability of having an illegitimate child; (4) access to common land, which enabled her to have a garden and animals to support her family; and (5) involvement in a revolutionary social movement in the 19th and/or 20th century.
   (Compare/Contrast. History 1605: Women in Social Movements)

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*Six classes of underprepared UCLA writing students, participants in the 1980-1981 Freshman Preparatory Program (FP²), engaged in six modified versions of the curriculum presented. Teachers interested in learning more about the program should contact Mike Rose, UCLA Writing Programs.

7. Compare and/or contrast the concept(s) of authority dealt with in Nishiyama with (x). (x) may be anything else we have read; it may be wise to focus your attention on one specific author, although it is perfectly all right to incorporate details from more than one writer into this part of your answer.
   (Compare/Contrast. Oriental Languages 142A: The Japanese Family System)
8. Define the notion of the "American Adam." Discuss *Huckleberry Finn* in light of the concept.
   (Definition/Analysis. English 85: The American Novel)

Appendix B

Sample Curriculum

WEEK I: INTRODUCTION

A. *Sensitization to Audience:* Have students compare/contrast two moderately difficult passages. (I recommend using passages that will be used again in the seventh week unit. This will provide pre-post data for student as well as program evaluation.) Have students exchange essays and discuss what they like and don't like in each. Their comments will vary, some students focusing on content, others responding to formal or stylistic qualities. This variety gives the teacher entree to a discussion of audience.

B. *Sensitization to Academic Audiences:* Next select a local discotheque or sporting event. Ask students to imagine that they, in turn, are painters, novelists, sociologists, psychologists, economists, and physiologists. Ask them how, donning each role, they might perceive the activity before them. How will perceptions differ with role? The teacher can now give a brief overview of the way knowledge is segmented within the university, discussing how that segmentation affects methodology.

C. *Introduce the Student to the Five Expository Types:* Good examples of all the expository modes save analysis can be found in introductory life or social science textbooks. Essays, monographs, and, occasionally, journals are also resources. Two particularly good examples are the following:

Classification: "Witchdoctors and the Universality of Healing," a chapter in E. Fuller Torrey's *The Mind Game,* is nicely abridged by Charles M. Cobb in *The Shapes of Prose* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1975), pp. 175–179.

Analysis: Robert Rowland, "Evolution of the M.G.," *Nature,* 217 (January 20, 1968), pp. 240–242. The process of analysis is clearly illustrated as Rowland cleverly uses evolutionary theory to examine the development of the M.G.

D. *A Word on Discussion and In-Class Writing:* The treatment of each expository type should move from in-class discussion to in-class assignments to homework. Group discussion allows students to test ideas or to get the germ of new ideas from other participants. Difficult

passages become progressively illuminated as one comment triggers another. One false lead or inaccurate reading is highlighted by a counterargument. (For excellent illustrations of this, see M.L.J. Abercrombie's *The Anatomy of Judgment* [London: Hutchinson, 1963].) In-class writing that is commented on but not graded allows the student to practice a particular expository type and take trial runs at homework. The students learn a type's characteristics and can build from this "solved problem" to the tougher assignment they will face that evening. Writing is clearly and continually grounded in careful thinking.

WEEK II: SERIATION

A. Discussion of the use of seriation in university writing, particularly in life and physical science's laboratory reports.

B. Discussion of concatenation versus correlation versus causality. Bring in billiard balls and tease them with Hume's argument. Once the students are clear on the differences between concatenation, correlation, and causality, discuss the importance of transitional words and phrases in indicating those differences.

C. Sample Exercises:

1. Instruct students to take notes as you read "On the Nature of Viruses" (Joseph Virdsell, *Human Evolution* [New York: Macmillan, 1972], pp. 18–19). Reread if necessary. Then pass out a sheet on which 10–12 of the viral reduplication steps are listed out of sequence, e.g.,
   "cell breaks open"
   "new viruses seek other bacterial hosts"
   "virus breaks down DNA of host bacterium"
   Have students rearrange the steps into correct order; then have them link the steps together in an essay. Instruct them to underline all transitions and explain the concatenational or correlational or causal implications of each.
2. Bring in a colleague and enact ten minutes of a therapy session. Have students take notes as they watch the interaction. Then have them write up particulars of the interaction, discussing transitional words and phrases as above.

D. To insure an understanding of the expository frame "seriation," present students with sample essay questions that "disguise" seriation—e.g., "Imagine you are a talkative carbon molecule that/who has just completed the Krebs cycle. What would you have to tell the waiting NBC reporter?" Also, have the students create several seriation questions of their own. These exercises keep students from developing fixed and narrow frames of the expository types. For brevity's sake I will hereafter refer to this as the flexibility exercise.

WEEK III: CLASSIFICATION

A. Discuss the universality of classification, man's search for pattern, the central role of concepts in perception and memory, etc.

Then lead to its use in all university disciplines. I find it useful, too, to spark discussion of its misuses—labeling, procrustian bedding—in academic investigation. Once they see these problems clearly, they are ready to criticize as well as generate classificational schema.

B. Sample Exercise:

Select twenty slides or plates of paintings of the human form. (I have used work by Chagall, Picasso, Eakins, Burne-Jones, Cezanne, Bonnard, Gainsborough, Síqueiros, Goya, and Velasquez.) Show the pictures repeatedly but give no hints as to artist or period. Have the students take notes. Then ask them to suggest possible classifications for these disparate representations. Do this as a group, using the board, to encourage rethinking of categories. (I see this as an important stage.) Once a number of satisfactory categories is generated, have the students pick four and write an essay classifying paintings under each.

C. Flexibility Exercise: Classification.

WEEKS IV AND V: SUMMARY TO SYNTHESIS

A. Discuss the use of summary to synthesis in sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Give examples of essay examination questions requiring summary. Distinguish between the summary assignment that simply calls for a synopsis of disparate views and the assignment that also requires a statement of preference once the views have been summarized. Distinguish among summary, summary with opinion, and true synthesis, explaining that synthesis is infrequently required in lower division work.

B. Sample Exercise:

Raymond Corsini's *Current Psychotherapies* (Itasca, Illinois: Peacock, 1973) is the sourcebook here. Pick psychoanalysis, client-centered therapy, reality therapy, and behavior therapy; extract a one-two page summary of the psychotherapeutic approaches of each. (An alternative would be to substitute theory of personality for psychotherapeutic approach.) Once discussed in class, these become materials for a homework summary assignment. Depending on the progress of the class, you can either request only summary or summary and opinion. In either case, require students to indicate, as best they can, similarities or differences between the psychotherapeutic methods. This involves them in true summary and also prepares them for compare/contrast exposition. If the class is exceptionally skilled, synthesis can be attempted now or later on in the quarter. But since synthesis usually builds from considerable study of a phenomenon, it might well be inappropriate to attempt it in Freshman Composition.

C. Summary versus classification versus seriation.

D. Flexibility Exercise: Summary.

WEEK VI: INTRODUCTION TO FORMAL AND STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS IN SCIENCES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND HUMANITIES EXPOSITION

A. Suggested Materials:

Sciences:

1. The Rowland article on the M.G., or V.E. Shashona, "RNA Changes in Goldfish Brain during Learning," *Nature,* 217 (Jan. 27, 1968), 238-40.
2. Norman H. Horowitz, "The Search for Life on Mars," *Scientific American,* 237 (Nov. 1977), 52-61.

Social Sciences:

John Mullen and Norman Abeles, "Relationship of Liking, Empathy, and Therapist's Experience to Outcome of Therapy," *Journal of Counseling Psychology,* 15 (1971), 39-43.

"Soft" Social Sciences:

Tony Aldgate, "British Newsreels and the Spanish Civil War," *History,* 58 (Feb. 1973), 60-63.

Humanities:

Erwin Steinberg, "K of *The Castle:* Ostensible Land Surveyor." *College English,* 27 (Dec. 1965), 185-89.

Obviously the material in these articles is for the specialist. Yet, students can be alerted to format, definitions of evidence, and style as well as to examples of the expository types embedded in or characterizing each piece. Raise questions about the use of jargon; about the third person and passive voice in the Mullen and Abeles' article; about evidence in Shashona versus that in Steinberg; about the structure of "British Newsreels and the Spanish Civil War" versus "Relationship of Liking, Empathy, and Therapist's Experience to Outcome of Therapy," etc.

WEEKS VII AND VIII: COMPARE/CONTRAST

A. Discuss the varieties of knowledge gained through comparing and contrasting: e.g., sensory perception, aesthetic judgment, grading, etc. Then focus the discussion on academic investigations in cultural anthropology, literary history, etc.

B. The compare/contrast essay examination.

C. Compare/contrast vs. summary vs. classification.

D. Sample Exercises:

1. Compare and contrast a creation myth (e.g., "Genesis II," in Jerome Rothenberg's *Technicians of the Sacred* [New York: Doubleday, 1968], p. 9) with the big bang theory as explained by George D. Abell in *Exploration of the Universe* ([3rd ed.; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964], p. 662).
2. Compare and contrast T. E. Hulme's: "The aim of science and of all thought is to reduce the complex and

inevitably disconnected world of grit and cinders to a few ideal systems which we can move about and so form an ungrit-like picture of reality—one flattering to our sense of power over the world" with Thom Gunn's

Flying Above California

Spread beneath me it lies—lean upland
sinewed and tawny in the sun, and
valley cool with mustard, or sweet with
loquat. I repeat under my breath
names of places I have not been to:
Crescent City, San Bernardino
—Mediterranean and Northern names.
Such richness can make you drunk.
Sometimes
on fogless days by the Pacific,
there is a cold hard light without break
That reveals merely what is—no more
no less. That limiting candor,
that accuracy of the beaches,
is part of the ultimate richness.

It is important, especially as assignments become more difficult, to have the class discuss each passage individually before attempting comparison.

E. Flexibility Exercise: Compare/contrast.

WEEKS IX AND X: ANALYSIS

A. Provide two definitions of analysis: (1) examining closely, breaking down into component elements, (2) using a framework or perspective to guide and inform examination. Explain how the first applies not only to ideas in a passage, but to the language and the stated or implied assumptions in the piece as well. Then discuss the relation of the second definition to the first, i.e., the frameworks, overt or hidden, that scholars use in examining phenomena. (For example, the Marxist or psychoanalytic historian investigating the hippie counterculture.) Each assignment in this unit will require students to analyze individual passages in the manner of the first definition; then, as they apply a theoretical passage to the passage to be analyzed, they operate in the manner of the second definition.

B. Sample Exercises:

1. Have students read G. P.'s account of death and the afterlife in Maria H. Nagy's "The Child's View of Death" (in Herman Feifel, ed., *The Meaning of Death* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959], pp. 86–87). After discussion, have them put Nagy aside to read and interpret the following passage by Carl Jung:

Unfortunately, the mythic side of man is given short shrift nowadays. He can no longer create fables. As a result, a great deal escapes him; for it is important and salutary to speak also of incomprehensible things. Such talk is like the telling of a good ghost story, as we sit by the fireside and smoke a pipe . . . to the intellect, all my mythologizing is futile speculation. To the emotions, however, it is a healing and valid activity; it gives existence a glamour which we would not like to do without. Nor is there any reason why we should.

Homework: Discuss the child's description in light of the perspective provided by Jung.

2. Read Donald Barthelme's short story "Game" (*Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts* [New York: Bantam, 1969], pp. 105–11). After discussion, have students put Barthelme aside to read the following statements on the environmental etiology of madness:

I think that the minimum condition for a relationship between people to be a love relationship is the experience, after a great deal of relationship work, of tenderness—which is the positive residue of feeling after all negativity, resentment, hostility, envy and jealousy have been dissolved away frequently enough and deeply enough. If it tightens one's definition of love considerably, this feeling amounts to trust. This means an end to secrets, no' . . . act carried out behind anybody's back. . . .

—David Cooper

Not only the mother but also the total family situation may impede rather than facilitate the child's capacity to participate in a real, shared world, as self-with-others. . . . The mother and father greatly simplify the world for the young child, and as his capacity grows to make sense, to inform chaos with pattern, to grasp distinctions and connections of greater and greater complexity, so, as Buber puts it, he is led out into a "feasible world." But what can happen if the mother's or the family's scheme of things does not match with what the child can live and breathe in? The child then has to develop its own piercing vision and to be able to live by that . . . or else become mad.

—R. D. Laing

The world offers invitations, questions, commands, promises, and threats. . . . Man lives in a world which invites him to live and to be . . some ways; it directs questions to him; and his world at times invite him to die.

—Sidney Jourard

The condition of alienation, of being asleep, of being unconscious, of being out of one's mind, is the condition of the normal man.

Society highly values its normal man. It educates children to lose themselves and to become absurd, and thus to be normal.

Normal men have killed perhaps 1,000,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years.

Our behavior is a function of our experience. We act according to the way we see things.

If our experience is destroyed, our behavior will be destructive.

—R. D. Laing

It was Lessing who once said, "There are things which must cause you to lose your reason or you have none to lose." An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is normal behavior.

—Viktor Frankl

We are formed in the absurdity of war. —André Malraux

Homework: Analyze the strange behavior of Shotwell and the narrator (in "Game") with the interactional and situational framework provided by Cooper *et al.*

C. Present a somewhat far-fetched analysis to the class. Have them discuss it, and lead them to see how once they unearth an analyzer's framework, they have a basis for critical evaluation.

D. Flexibility Exercise: Analysis.

CHAPTER IV

Reviewing the Major Works

Reviewing the Major Works

"The last fifteen years have seen more research on writing than did all the previous centuries combined," observed a colleague of mine recently. The Exxon seminar reviewed and then summarized books which get to the heart of what has been going on in research and in pedagogy applying that research. No book here is without ramifications for the classroom. Although it is always the hope of the reviewer to lead the reader to the original work, these summaries were written with harried composition teachers in mind—until they could get time to read the whole, enough insight should be self-contained in the review to invigorate actual teaching.

The books range from theory to practical research to the nuts-and-bolts needed to hold the class hour together. Two books seemed so outstanding, both in style and substance, that all participants read and discussed them. We highlight them by placing them first. Mina Shaughnessy's classic *Errors and Expectations*, an act of respect and affection for the basic student, vibrates with intelligence and compassion. John Trimble's *Writing with Style* assumes basic competence but not much else; he leads the student with the pleasure of his prose down, up, and around the steps that make writing comprehensible. His first chapter is worth most books.

Four other books show how writing ability develops. James Britton studies young children to see how they make sense of the world through language. This making sense remains a most powerful motive for writing. James Moffett noted the natural development of the personality outward and upward—a movement he crystallizes in suggesting that teachers sequence writing assignments from the personal to the objective. Individual class assignments can be sequenced by having students answer the questions: what is happening, what happened, what happens, and what could happen: narration, reporting, generalizing, and speculating. Nancy Martin and her colleagues studied 65 British schools and found most school writing was really testing—an inhibitive situation. Students can rarely find their own distinctive voices in this environment. William Perry shows how college students themselves grow in their intellectual view of the world and their sense of responsibility to it.

Several books were chosen with direct student use in mind. Ann Berthoff's text is difficult, but, once mastered, provides solid

techniques for inducing not just writing, but real thinking. Peter Elbow, too, is concerned with writing as thinking, particularly that form of thinking that goes on while we suppose we're idle, namely, incubation. He shows students of all ages how to write without teachers. Macrorie advises much freewriting to hook what he calls Engfish, a monster that can be suffocated by learning more telling forms of writing. Ira Shor stresses the kind of critical thinking that comes with students' examining their environment, their powerlessness or power, their control of their lives. He makes such critiques the heart of daily assignments—emulating Paul Freire who taught an illiterate people quickly through intense motivation.

Extremely helpful, both for better students and for professionals, are Joseph Williams' book on style and Zinsser's application of good writing techniques to the world of business, law, sportswriting, as well as academia. Williams makes learning refinements of prose style relatively easy, even fun.

Showing the powerful status-hungers at work within various styles of writing, Richard Lanham outlines a theory whose application would lead to a linguistic revolution. He would replace the officious, windy national style with a Renaissance-like pleasure in language. Hirsch presents an almost opposite philosophy of composition. For him, utilitarian ease in reading becomes the basis for judging most good writing. Hirsch invokes both the history of writing and studies in psycholinguistics to stress the importance of predictability and efficiency in writing. Lanham delves the depths of psyche to show why we need so much more. Two rather lean discourses, they make exciting reading in tandem.

Included here as the book people talk about and have never really read is James Kinneavy's *A Theory of Discourse*. Kinneavy tries to put some order in the chaotic world of discourse studies. Cooper and Odell's book, *Research on Composing: Points of Departure,* presents twelve scholars who review important concepts in writing and then suggest what needs to be done further. Emig's work, the motherwork from which so many progeny have sprung, is an in-depth example of the kind of research Cooper suggests we need more of.

These books inspire respect for the teaching of writing. But they also make clear how much more needs to be known. The problems created by our brave attempts to offer literacy to everyone have opened up a field of investigation that demands our brightest and best.

Patricia Simmons Taylor

Two Exceptional Books

Shaughnessy, Mina P. **Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Purpose: Shaughnessy's purpose is to guide teachers of basic writing in order to provide them with a better inventory of techniques than they are likely to draw up on their own, and to be precise about the types of difficulties found in basic writing.

Thesis: Basic writing students write the way they do not because they are slow, non-verbal, indifferent, or incapable, but because they are beginners and must learn by making mistakes. This book assumes that good teachers create good programs, and that the best programs are those developed in response to the needs of individual student populations.

Summary

Chapter I: Introduction

This book is precise about the types of difficulties to be found in BW (basic writing) papers. The author does three things:

1. Gives examples of the range of problems that occur under each category of difficulty.
2. Offers explanations for these problems.
3. Suggests ways in which a teacher might approach the problems.

The author notes that for the BW student, academic writing is a trap, not a means of expression. That confusion seems to paralyze the writer at this level.

In a society that generates more writing than any other society in history, a person who does not control the dominant code of literacy is likely to encounter many obstacles surmountable only by those who have already mastered the code.

Chapter II: Handwriting and Punctuation

The most important fact about BW students is that, although they have talked for years, they have written infrequently. When the mechanical process is labored, the writer does not have easy access to this thought. Shaughnessy recommends that the student write so often that the pen becomes the most natural extension of the hand.

According to Shaugnessy, the "code" of punctuation can best be broken by

1. linking standard terms with homelier ones (e.g.: a compound sentence is called a double sentence),
2. stressing the importance of punctuation as a system of messages.

Professor Shaughnessy provides a detailed sequence which is intended to help students reason their way through punctuation difficulties.

Chapter III: Syntax

For the BW writer, the writing process creates a code-consciousness that is inhibiting. The teacher will have difficulties finding familiar categories for classifying problems. The author divides syntactic errors into four categories:

1. accidental errors
2. blurred patterns
3. consolidation errors
4. inversions

A writing class must be more than an exercise, for it is as writers that students can develop the verbal responsiveness to their thoughts and their reader's demands, a process leading to mature syntax.

Chapter IV: Common Errors

The errors that surprise and alarm English teachers are those not expected from mature Americans. BW students have a quasi-foreign relationship to the language they are learning to write.

The most common errors are in the following areas:

1. verbs—irregular, future and modal auxiliaries, inflections, periphrases, time relationships
2. nouns—plural, possessive
3. pronouns—juxtapositions
4. subject-verb agreement

Presented are three parts of a four part lesson: Diagnostic Test, Introductions and Explanations. (The fourth part is Exercises.) The teacher is advised to plan a sequence of lessons based on the seriousness, frequency, and troublesomeness of the students' errors.

The student writer finds that learning to correct common errors is the least rewarding part of writing; it is heavy work for modest rewards. Correctness is not all the work of a composition course, but it must be part of the work.

Chapter V: Spelling

More than one method can be used to teach spelling. The four main causes of misspelling are:

1. the system
2. differences between spoken and spelled English
3. ignorance of the rules that work
4. the inexperienced eye

Following are some ways of helping the students to spell:

1. Assume that these misspellings can be controlled.
2. Teach students to observe themselves as spellers.
3. Be sure students understand pertinent terms and operations before they begin individualized work.
4. Start work on misspellings that can be controlled by applying rules.
5. Develop awareness of main discrepancies between student's pronunciations and certain spelling words.
6. Develop awareness of ways in which pronunciation helps the speller.
7. Develop students' ability to discriminate among graphemic options.
8. Develop precision in viewing written words.
9. Teach the use of the dictionary.

Chapter VI: Vocabulary

Course design, content area teachers, remedial teachers, and students themselves must join hands in helping the BW student to develop an academic vocabulary:

1. It is probably advisable to reduce somewhat the number of new words students must learn in introductory content area courses.
2. All teachers must share responsibility for vocabulary development. Here, content teachers and remedial teachers can work together.
3. Students must be helped to increase vocabulary so that they can extend themselves.
4. Remedial teachers must serve as mediators between the students' language and the academic language. Teachers must also be models; their obvious enjoyment of language, their precision of use, and their courtesy in sharing their vocabulary are all aids to their students.

Chapter VII: Beyond the Sentence

The BW student *can* communicate ideas in an essay, albeit deficient in style and extent of elaboration. To assist the writer, a simple set of imagined responses may serve to generate a basic essay form:

Listener:

1. What's your point?
2. I don't get your meaning.
3. Prove it to me.
4. So what?

Writer's Response:

1. Thesis statement.
2. Restatement in different words.
3. Illustration, evidence, argument.
4. Conclusion.

Writing teachers are wise to assume that years of steady work and attention in an academic setting are sure to help students' intellectual growth. Students who have something to say should be allowed to express themselves in writing and not be required to wait until all their sentence problems have been solved.

Chapter VIII: Expectations

A BW teacher may find a skills chart helpful in apportioning each semester's work. Shaughnessy provides one. Each of the skills must be examined in terms of the goal, method, mode, and sequence of instruction.

Ideally, remedial students meet in a workshop setting five days a week for at least one class period daily (two hours preferable). A class of fifteen students should have at least one teacher with two student tutors in class during the writing sessions (three to four a week).

Teachers who assume that students can learn are not likely to be sources of the students' failures. Those teachers search in students' work for a means to assess the students' needs and for strengths to build on.

Reviewed by Joyce Mills

* * *

John R. Trimble. **Writing With Style: Conversations On The Art of Writing.**
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

Purpose: A brief, informal, and practical guide to the art of writing designed for students who may never have understood the basics of expository writing, who may have become befuddled by over-detailed textbooks, or who may never have had a graphic sense of how good writers use the tools of their trade. Trimble's purposes are: (1) to explain how experienced writers think, (2) to share a number of useful tips on writing, and (3) to answer recurring questions about punctuation and style. The book also includes a useful chapter on "How to write a critical analysis" and on "Proofreading."

Thesis: Writing is applied psychology because it is the art of creating desired effects. The writer's chief need, therefore, is to understand the psychological element of the art of writing—what effects are desirable and how to create them.

Summary of Key Chapters

Chapter 1: Getting Launched

With good thinking comes good writing; without it, no amount of technical expertise will save you. It is necessary, therefore, to have a reliable means of coming up with ideas plus some technique of readily converting them into coherent prose.

Suggested method:

1. Choose a subject that interests you.
2. Delimit your subject by deciding how you wish to treat it.
3. Stockpile data—facts, ideas, details, quotations, parallels, impressions. Readers like to be taught and prefer the concrete to the abstract, and the writer himself needs to gain confidence from a sure grasp of facts.
4. Generate facts and ideas by formulating a variety of searching questions (Why? What? How? When? Where?) and sketch out tentative answers on separate slips of paper (5 x 8) in the form of mini-paragraphs. Be sure to write out the question at the top of each new slip and to number the slips relating to each question to avoid confusion later. Collect the slips like cards in a pack and mull over them. As you re-read, keep shuffling the sequence so that your mind is forced to confront different combinations of ideas. From these different combinations unexpected contrasts and similarities will emerge. These, too, you should jot down, along with any other details that occur to you. The object is to accumulate data which function like fuel for the brain. This system has two virtues:
   a. Psychological: You write much of your paper before you begin writing, and by writing under the guise of doing something else (i.e., gathering data), you aren't so likely to choke.
   b. Organizational: You have convenient places to store your ideas, as well as an easy means of retrieving and rearranging them.
5. Organize. Decide which of your ideas is the meatiest in that it contains a solid thesis (argument); then sift through the remaining ideas to find an interesting logical direction for the essay to take. Think of the essay as a story with a beginning, middle, and end.
6. Write rough drafts. Instead of writing a single draft, scribble two or three quick rough drafts as a warming-up exercise and as a means of helping you to understand what you are trying to say. Here are some suggestions for writing a warm-up draft:
   a. Take one last leisurely look at your 5 x 8 slips, get a reasonably clear sense of what you think you want to say, put the slips out of sight, and begin *talking* out your thoughts on paper as if you were explaining a concept to a friend.
   b. Begin anywhere and simply write the words, "Well, it seems to me that . . ." and go from there.
   c. Set yourself a time limit, say thirty minutes, so as to force yourself to scribble freely instead of compose.

d. Never let yourself pause, and don't censor your thoughts. Force your pen to write all the confusion you're feeling (e.g., "I seem to have stalled here. How can I go on?"). This way your problem will work itself out through the act of verbalizing, and you could discover something new.
e. Use your own voice, not the language of academe.

7. Read the draft critically. See whether you like your thesis, how to enrich it, what ideas are good or weak, and underline parts where you need further support. Then go back to your 5 x 8 slips, mull over them again, check off points you've made in the paper and underline points you need to incorporate.
8. Now begin again a whole new version, following the same procedure as in item #6, but allowing yourself longer time, say forty-five minutes. Don't slow down or edit what you have written.
9. After this version you'll know whether you need to write a third. If not, you are at the editing or revising stage. The object is now to find words that best express what you want to say, and the organization that gives it greatest coherence. Concentrate on the first paragraph; get it in reasonably good shape but leave finishing touches for last. Continue through the paper, paragraph by paragraph, moving sentences and paragraphs around like blocks, deleting extraneous ideas, brightening up dull phrases, clarifying muddy thoughts, tightening up continuity, converting passive constructions to actives, and looking for repetitions. Read every sentence aloud, listening to the sounds of phrases and checking for continuity.

Chapter 2: Thinking Well

The natural tendency of a student is to think primarily of himself and thus to write primarily for himself and not for an audience. He forgets that his purpose is to communicate with his reader, even persuade and charm him. He needs, therefore, to develop a "writer's sense"—to become aware of the social implications of what he's doing, and to this end put himself imaginatively into the mind of the reader (empathy), and to appreciate the reader's feelings (courtesy). Here are some tips on how to serve the reader's needs:

1. Have something to say that's really worth his attention.
2. Be sold on its validity so you can sell it with conviction.
3. Furnish strong arguments that are well supported.
4. Use language that sells—vigorous verbs, strong nouns, etc.
5. Phrase your thoughts clearly so that you're easy to follow.
6. Speak to the point so you don't waste your reader's time.
7. Anticipate his many questions and responses.
8. Offer him variety and humor to keep him interested.

9. Converse with him in a warm, friendly, open manner instead of pontificating.

Chapter 4: Openers

From the reader's standpoint, a good opener should reveal enthusiasm for the subject, perceptiveness, a flair for appealing to the reader, and a clear mind. For the writer, openers help him to see how the rest of his paper will go. The opening paragraph should be neither long nor short, but full-bodied and organized so that the strongest statement (thesis) comes at the end. When you have written the introductory paragraph, ask yourself, "Is it intriguing, complex, controversial enough?" If you find it hard to get going, say to yourself, "Okay, now what is it I'm really trying to say?" Then simply say it—talk it.

Chapter 5: Middles

The middle section of an essay is inseparable from the opening since it consists of the development of the thesis; also, it is inseparable from the process whereby the thesis is arrived at, since it amounts to a coherent retelling of that process. The student should have two goals—to explain and to persuade—so the middle section must show, above all, *continuity of argument,* which entails the following:

1. a coherent understanding of what he wants to say
2. a simple style
3. occasional repetition of key words
4. careful use of pronouns, such as "this" and "that"
5. clear connections within and between paragraphs
6. "signposting" of the argument by use of conjunctive adverbs or brief transitional phrases to signal the kind of thought that is coming next, e.g., "above all," "besides," "consequently," "furthermore," "similarly."

Chapter 6: Closers

Because the last paragraph will probably make the strongest impression the reader carries away with him, be sure to accomplish the following:

1. Get your main point in sharp focus.
2. Gratify your reader with at least one new idea.
3. Give your ending emotional impact.

Chapter 7: Diction

1. *Conciseness:* Good writing begins with a profound respect for the value of words—their precise denotations, their precise connotations, even their weight and music. Every word of every sentence must work to maximum efficiency, so the writer should constantly revise for conciseness and clarity until he is satisfied that he cannot make his phrases any more succinct without sacrificing clarity.
2. *Vigorous verbs:* Verbs function as the power center of every sentence, so they should be strong, active, and definite.

3. *Freshness:* Good writers continually feed the reader's appetite for a fresh idea, a fresh phrase, a fresh image, and a touch of wit. They use their imaginations to find pictorial analogies (similes and metaphors) and choice adjectives.

Chapter 8: Tips for Increasing Your Readability

Trimble is opposed to the Formal Style for its conventionality and phoniness—its elaborate self-consciousness, stilted diction, abstract phraseology, frozen sentence rhythms, etc. He claims that the best style is natural, conversational in tone, vigorous, gracefully informal, idiomatic; it is authentic and personal. Here are some ways of promoting an authentic and readable style:

1. Write with the assumption that your reader is a companionable friend with a warm sense of humor and an appreciation of simple straightforwardness.
2. Write as if you were actually talking with enough leisure to frame your thoughts concisely and interestingly.
3. Substitute the pronoun "that" for "which" whenever possible because it is less bookish and more conversational.
4. Use occasional contractions to show your reader that you're not a prude.
5. Use "I," not "one," "we," or "the writer."
6. Use dashes to isolate concluding phrases for emphasis or humorous effect.
7. Use dialogue.
8. Vary sentence length.
9. The more abstract the essay, the more you should lace it with illustrations, analogies, quotations, and concrete details.
10. Keep adjectives to a minimum; let strong nouns do the work of adjectives.
11. Avoid trite adverbs like "very," "extremely," or "really."
12. Use the fewest and simplest words possible.
13. Use semicolons to reduce choppiness.
14. Read your prose aloud. If it sounds heavy, ask yourself how you would say it to a friend. Another tip: Read a few paragraphs by a writer you like and ask yourself how he would write what you are trying to express.

Reviewed by Stephen Miles

How Writing Develops—Or Is Thwarted

James Britton. **Language and Learning.** New York: Penguin, 1970.

Purpose: To explain the place of language in the emotional and cognitive growth of the child. To study the language of children so as to explore the relation of language to thought. To inquire into the means by which man, via language, continually brings his past to bear on his present.

Major Thesis: Language is a means by which we organize our representation of the world. That means of organization develops at an early age (at three, with memory) and grows out of early language use (the "running commentary"). Relying on Cassirer and Langer, Britton builds his theories of man as the symbol-using animal, proposing that "every encounter with the actual is an experimental committal of all one has learned from experience." How children first use language and how it grows into cognitive thought is the focus of this book.

Summary

Chapter 1: Language orders our representations of the world. It develops through transactions with the environment and is associated with the earliest feelings of love and security. Man, the symbol user, uses language as one way of symbolizing—symbols here construed as a set of expectations about the world that are being constantly revised. Thus the mind constitutes or "creates" reality, and it is this very pleasure and power of constituting that account for our earliest attempts at language.

Chapter 2: The child's earliest use of language is in the form of "content" rather than "command." He finds pleasure in matching his actions to others' words (patty cake . . . patty cake) and in simple imitation of sounds. Langer's view that the earliest drive for symbolizing is tied to the need to think and Cassirer's that it is the desire for the detection and conquest of an objective world support the argument. The child achieves these ends by imitating "methods of going about saying things" rather than particular words. This accounts for the improvisational, exploratory mode of his earliest language use. Importantly, from the first, the child is able to "generate" sentences he has never heard because he has taken in the "forms of utterance" by long listening and has induced a latent structure.

Playful language as opposed to practiced language has a role in language acquisition. Children first use playful speech forms to use speech that is not tied to the here and now. There are, for instance, the "before bed monologue" (using free associations of syntactical forms) and the sing-song "spiel" (using rhythmical, repetitive language intoned or sung for an audience). Nonsense rhymes, make-believe, and fantasy—all drive a wedge between words and things. These forms grow in an environment of talk between adult and child—talk which is connected to higher mental activity.

Chapter 3. School years are particularly important ones for language acquisition. Two language modes must be distinguished and both encouraged: language in the participant role and language in the spectator role. With the former, language is functional (part of the activity): in participant roles we plan and get things done, we inform, we instruct and persuade people, we set forth pros and cons and come to conclusions, we explain and argue. With the spectator role, language is removed from activity: we engage in relaxed surveying, daydreaming, projecting of past or present, gossiping, and reading or writing literature. With the participant role, the stress is on developing a world view, and reorganizing it to preserve our world from fragmentation—thus permitting broader evaluations, the savoring of feelings, and the contemplation of forms. Whereas the participant mode is the language of "getting things done," the spectator mode is the language of "being and becoming."

Chapter 4: The role of the schools should be carefully considered. The beginning of school should encourage the development of difference in language usage: a refinement of language in the role of spectator (delight in utterance) and the evolution of language in the role of the participant. Evolution is central here. The child's talk with family should continue in school as "talk while doing"; writing skills are *based* on this talk. Therefore, the schools must build on out-of-school talk, avoiding absolute judgments of right and wrong in favor of judgments relative to circumstance. Teachers need to fight the schools' tendency to distinguish the language of street and home from the language of the school. Acceptance of differences is crucial through the junior high school age range. Social discourse, fundamental to later cognitive tasks, should be encouraged—a speech embedded in action and context. The teacher should have faith that example, reading experience, and increasingly abstract subject matter will gradually influence children's speech choice. Patience and faith in the total process of school are primary.

Exploring speech possibilities through dramatization, play, improvisation, and make-believe all contribute to the child's exploration through language of self and world and help him understand different points of view. In addition, through the natural pleasure of listening to readings, children 1) gain language experience 2) gain life experience 3) participate as a group. Stories naturally

extend personal experience. Stories and poems, read and discussed or created, are themselves central to the development of language skills in both participant and spectator roles—narrative not competing with life, but continuing the adjusting, remembering, dreaming, evaluating activities of everyday life. Significantly, children up to the age of eleven listen to poetry with special sensitivity. Not only is their early writing closer to poetry than prose, but they show high sensitivity to the sounds of language, to the pleasure of language.

Learning to read can also be an exploration of speech and may best come about through composing. Students "read" what they have written (by manipulating word cards), thus exploring *systems* governing written English. The process of composing in written language should be married to that of reading, and both should relate to the learner's spoken language resources; reading and writing—like speaking—continue through life as learning processes. As with speech, children learn to read before they fully understand. I. A. Richards' advice stands: "let them read the book as though it made sense."

Writing, for a child, takes the form of joyful object-making or performance. Writing begins as written down speech. "Social speech" is less helpful than "narrative" and "planning" speech because the latter are sustained, depend less on the listener, and are in due course internalized; the cues for the next line are what the child just said. The main point about writing is that it develops out of talk, even when the child partly draws on newly learned "forms" of writing. Talk has two patterns: 1) expressive—the way one thinks and feels about something, telling us about *him*, and 2) transactional—telling us about "things out there," taking into consideration the reader's point of view.

Chapter 5: This chapter speculates about the relation between language and thought. Language is the "projection of potential meanings into the raw material of experience." Relationships which only language permits are illustrated by the negative ("no" exists only as a linguistic form; there are no negatives in nature). Thus language helps create thought. Thought, however, may go beyond language. If at seven, "speech for oneself" becomes abbreviated, finally going underground as "inner speech," then likely verbal *thought* becomes more abbreviated, less tied to speech, freed from the restrictions from which it derived. But higher levels of thought are achieved by looking at language itself for contradiction and discrepancy, by first verbalizing complex experiences and then contemplating these verbalizations. In this way, a child's powers of organization in thought come to exceed his powers of organization in speech. Language and thought, then, are powerfully related, but separate in origin (thought begins in pre-verbal behavior) and in forms of development (thought goes beyond language).

Chapter 6. This chapter emphasizes adult life as a web of human relationships. At adolescence, the child has moved from a world of

objects to a world of people—thus the need in the classroom for talk whose function is to explore those relationships. The adolescent's main concern is with the establishment of similarities and differences between himself and those around him and with establishing unity among the many roles he plays. Teachers should help the adolescent use the symbols that reflect that struggle. Social speech between intimates, in-group language, and slang characterize their speech. Intimate group conversations have particular importance, paving the way for class discussions, for bonding, and finally for discussions of literature.

Writing, for the adolescent, is often deliberately sought as a way of tying down his experiences, as it is both more explicit than talk and more durable—a tangible record. His urge is to shape the experience in order to share it.

To the adolescent's world of people is added the world of ideas. He is bursting with them. Piaget ties the development of mature power of thought to the saturation of ideas. Thinking about thinking, constructing systems of ideas, testing hypotheses, using language to discover individual values, revolting against language, spinning broad theories about the universe—all typify adolescent mental processes.

Usefulness to teaching: The book is extremely useful in helping teachers see themselves as part of a learning continuum that begins at birth and doesn't end until death. Teachers need to build on the *speech* resources that their students already have. They should avoid setting up artificial distinctions between language of the street and language of the classroom. Reading and writing should develop from existing motivations: students need to explore experience beyond their own lives—they take pleasure in it; students need to write as a way of solidifying an environment in constant flux. Most important, teachers should allow for a gradual evolution of writing skill, based on exploration, example, reading experience, imitation. Error correction only emphasizes the artificiality of the classroom environment. Language's constitutive nature makes it naturally enjoyable. A diversification of language uses, an atmosphere conducive to talk, a consideration of the student's needs and motivations reinforce the "living is learning" equation. As we first speak above our ability to understand, so perhaps teachers should allow students to read and write above their ability. The words "fill" with meaning as we use them, and come to understand them.

Reviewed by Diane Durkin

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Moffet, James. **Teaching the Universe of Discourse.** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.

Purpose: Moffett attempts to provide teachers of writing with practical strategies that can be used in basic as well as advanced writing

courses. Specifically, he proposes a new integration of learning that brings it in line with the goals of discourse—thinking, listening, reading and writing.

Major Thesis: Language learning is cognitive and therefore depends largely on general mental growth. By exploring all the shifts that occur in the relationship among speaker, listener, and subject, one can find sequences of activities to be embodied in a curriculum.

Summary

For Moffett, the sequential psychological growth of the child forms the backbone of a global curriculum. For example, spelling and punctuation are not developmental beyond the age of 9 or 10. On the other hand, comprehending and composing do evolve as children mature. Language learning is therefore a cognitive matter, and the development of such learning depends on nothing less than general mental growth.

Increased consciousness of abstracting has much to do with developmental growth; therefore it seems reasonable to propose a *curriculum based on the hierarchy of abstraction.* We constantly process new experience up through the cycle of sensations, memories, generalizations, and theories. The proposed curriculum would recapitulate these stages and maneuvers. The purpose would be to have students abstract at all ranges.

In discovering and delineating the kinds of discourse, we use all dimensions of abstracting. Arrayed here in order of increasing distance between speaker and audience, discourse varies according to degree of abstraction:

Reflection—intrapersonal communication

Conversation—interpersonal communication between people in vocal range

Correspondence—interpersonal communication between remote individuals or groups with some personal knowledge of each other

Publication—impersonal communication to a large anonymous group extended over space and/or time

The writer *records* what is happening, *reports* what happened, *generalizes* from what happens, and *theorizes* about what may happen.

Drama (recording), narrative (reporting), exposition (generalizing), and argumentation (theorizing) may be redefined in terms of (1) distance between speaker and subject; (2) levels of increasing abstraction; and (3) a sequence of activities or skills which the student should learn how to do—record, report, generalize, and theorize—in that order.

Here is Moffett's spectrum of discourse which enlarges on the above categories; he suggests elsewhere a curriculum (grades 1-13) be based on this progression:

Interior Dialogue (egocentric speech) Vocal Dialogue (socialized speech)	Recording, the drama of what is happening	PLAYS
Correspondence Personal Journal Autobiography Memoir	Reporting, the narrative of what happened.	FICTION
Biography Chronicle History	Generalizing, the exposition of what happens.	ESSAY
Science Metaphysics	Theorizing, the argumentation of what will, may happen.	

Reflected in Moffett's spectrum of discourse is his thought that the primary dimension of growth seems to be a movement from the center of the self outward, an idea that parallels Piaget's theory of the self assimilating the world to itself and accommodating itself to the world. Having created a convincing sequence for both language growth and for discourse, Moffett cautions the reader, however, about translating the theory into syllabi and textbooks, a qualification that leads him to discuss the changes in methods of teaching composition and language arts.

Moffett points out that the main claims of grammar teaching are of two very different sorts. One concerns correct usage and the other concerns increased syntactic versatility through grammar knowledge. To the first claim Moffett responds with, "Many children do not deviate from standard grammar and even those who deviate do so in far less significant ways than has been supposed." In the second matter, according to Moffett, there is good reason to believe that the final answer to linguistic elaboration lies beyond language, in general cognitive development. He shows that transformational theory, particularly sentence-combining, is an alternative method to grammar teaching for developing syntactic maturity.

As for composition, Moffett believes that writing is learned in the same basic way other activities are learned—by doing and by heeding what happens. For this reason, it is possible to describe ideal teaching practices and compare them with some current practices.

We have two ideal approaches to writing: feedback learning and trial and error.

1. Feedback learning
   a. Students write because they are intent on saying something for real reasons of their own.
   b. They write because they want to have certain effects on a definite audience.
   c. They write only authentic kinds of discourse such as exist outside of school.
   d. Adjustments in language, form, and content come as the writer responds to the audience's response.
2. Trial and Error
   a. The writer plunges into the act and then heeds the results.
   b. The teacher does not try to prevent the reader from making errors.
   c. Errors are valuable; they are the essential learning instrument.
   d. Errors define what is good in the writing.
   e. Consequences, not injunctions, teach.

These approaches may be compared with current practices, particularly those determined by the textbook. Moffett's major case against textbooks is the futility of preteaching writing problems. To demonstrate, he classifies textbook materials into six types:

1, 2, and 3. Advice, exhortation and injunction. Practical pointers and helpful pointers encourage students to adopt the strategy of error-avoidance. The writer must keep this advice in mind when he should be thinking about the needs of the subject.

4. Expository. The assumption seems to be that naming a thing is mastering it. Exposition codifies the regularities of practice; it tells the writer what people do. Good teaching shows the writer what he in particular is to do.

5. Exercises. The philosophy here is that basics are components and that the writer should manipulate each of these separately. "When decomposition precedes composition, many harmful side effects occur." The student develops "learning sets" (Harlow) or "deutero-learning" (Bateson). *He is learning that way of learning.*

   Exercises encourage a student to adopt a strategy of taking a simplistic approach to meet the purpose of the activity. They also ignore the motivational and learning needs of the student.

6. Writing stimulants and assignment directions. They are either windy or provoke canned writing.

Reviewed by Stephen Montgomery

Nancy Martin et al., **Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum, 11–16.** School's Council Publication; London: Ward's Lock Educational, 1976.

Purpose: From 1971 to 1975 the University of London Institute of Education funded a research group, the School's Council Writing Across the Curriculum Project, to investigate student writing in grades 11–16. The Project sampled over 2,000 pieces of writing from 65 British secondary schools. This book summarizes the Project's findings and presents recommendations for improving the design and setting of secondary writing assignments.

Project Goals: The Project's research addresses two related questions about secondary writing assignments:

1. How do most students perceive their audience when they write?
2. How do students perceive the purpose of most writing assignments?

Major Findings: The majority of students at all levels aim their writing at an audience of one—their teacher. Students generally perceive writing assignments as testing instruments—a way of proving that they have either fulfilled an assignment or mastered a particular subject. This teacher-exam view of writing inhibits the natural learning process and alienates students from writing as a tool of intellectual inquiry.

Implications:

1. Accountability vs. Inquiry: When a teacher uses student writing as an evaluative tool, he distorts the natural relations of writing and thinking. Writing amounts to nothing more than an exercise in documentation. This attitude teaches students that writing has nothing to do with their own personal, mental, emotional, and social development.
2. Writing with Authority vs. Writing to Authority: In a practical communications situation, the writer takes a position of authority in relation to both subject and audience. But in a teacher-centered classroom, students must address an audience—an instructor—who is clearly better informed than themselves. This distortion of the communications setting makes students overly cautious in their work. Afraid to expose themselves before an "expert," they avoid intellectual risks, censure speculation, and stifle their creative ideas. Under such circumstances, the writing task often amounts to second-guessing the expectations and idiosyncracies of the authoritarian instructor.

3. Reproduction vs. Reconstruction: Every time they write, mature writers confront two related tasks: they must balance their own intentions against their audience's expectations, and they must choose from the available pool of verbal resources suitable to the knowledge or experience they want to convey. By resolving these two tensions inherent in the writing process, they develop their own voices—their sense of style. The traditional classroom denies students the chance to discover their own distinctive voice because it over-emphasizes audience and the limits of formal Standard English. Once relieved of the responsibility of making these crucial stylistic decisions, students simply reproduce the formal English they most frequently hear; they imitate their teachers and their texts.
4. Writing as an Alien Act: When students write to teacher-examiners, writing itself becomes an irrelevant and arbitrary chore; ultimately it becomes a form of judgment divorced from the students' interests, experience, and personality. Above all, writing approached from this perspective becomes an act of violence—a teacher's tool for exposing the student's ignorance.

Recommendations

1. The Teacher's Role: The Project suggests that we change our whole approach to secondary education by emphasizing process over the simple accumulation of information. This change in emphasis implies that the teacher drop the role of assessor and become a cooperative partner in the learning process. Teachers must give students the freedom to select and explore their own areas of interest. Only if the teacher assumes the role of guide and if students are free to generate their own motivation will they become fully engaged in learning as a mode of creative discovery.
2. Direct Experience: The Project further recommends that teachers encourage students to base all learning and writing on direct personal experience. Such experience might include creative writing, writing from personal experience, writing based on direct observation, and even writing that involves the creative use of secondary materials. The Project also recommends that teachers promote "hypothetical thinking" through imagination games. The authors offer several suggestions for ways of involving the student's own spoken language in the composing process. A full chapter is devoted to bridging the gap between "talk" and formal exposition.

Reviewed by Gary Colombo

William G. Perry, Jr., **Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme.** New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970.

Purpose: Perry describes the structures which students impute to the world, especially the way they construe the nature and origins of knowledge, of value, and of responsibility.

Major Thesis: Although students may avoid responsibility for their own intellectual and ethical development by temporizing, retreating or escaping, most will eventually experience the full range of the following scheme. Beginning with "those simplistic forms in which a person construes his world in unqualified polar terms of absolute right-wrong, good-bad," the student "ends with those complex forms through which he undertakes to affirm his own commitments in a world of contingent knowledge and relative values."

Summary

Perry analyzes the student's development into nine positions. Positions 1–3 show a modifying of dualism; 4–6, the realizing of relativism; and 7–9, the evolving of commitments. The following simplification of the scheme comes primarily from Perry's own abstract ("Main Line of Development," pp. 9–10).

Position 1: At this point, the student sees the world in terms of we-right-good vs. other-wrong-bad. Right Answers for everything exist in the Absolute, known to Authority whose role it is to teach them. Here the student perceives knowledge and goodness as qualitative accretions of discrete rightnesses to be collected by hard work and obedience. That is, the student believes that a "fact is a fact," and if he acquires enough facts, he is learning.

Position 2: Now the student modifies his dualism by recognizing diversity of opinion, and uncertainty, but he accounts for them as unwarranted confusion in poorly qualified Authorities or as mere exercises set by Authority so he can learn to find The Answer for himself.

Position 3: In the final modification of dualism, the student accepts diversity and uncertainty as legitimate but still temporary in areas where Authority "hasn't found The Answer yet." In those areas, the student, puzzled as to standards, supposes Authority grades him on 'good expression.'

Position 4: As he begins to accept relativity, the student typically reacts in one, or both, of two ways. First, he may perceive legitimate uncertainty—and therefore diversity of opinion—to be extensive and raise it to the status of an unstructured epistemo-

logical realm of its own in which "anyone has a right to his own opinion," a realm where right-wrong still prevails. Or, second, the student may perceive qualitative contextual reasoning as a special case of "what they want" within Authority's realm.

Position 5: The student's relativistic thinking, self-conscious in its newness in Position 4, gradually becomes habitual. He expands its use beyond the specific course or situation in which he first used it. Starting with a special case, he emerges with the assumption that all human knowledge is relative.

Position 6: The student perceives the necessity of orienting himself in a relativistic world through some form of personal commitment. He realizes he must affirm his values with no guarantee that these particular values are better than any others. He knows he must invest his energies, care, and identity, and he must take responsibility for this commitment.

Position 7: From this point on, there is no major restructuring. The student now assumes that man's knowing and valuing are relative in time and circumstance and that in such a world the individual must face responsibility for choice and affirmation in life. He feels strongly defined by the role he has chosen—doctor, lawyer, etc.

Positions 8 & 9: In these positions, the individual finetunes his lifestyle, probably after graduation from college. He finds equilibrium in each of a variety of polar pairs: stability vs. flexibility, certainty vs. doubt, self-centered vs. other-centered, tolerance vs. contempt, idealism vs. realism, and so forth.

General Educational Implications: The most difficult instructional moment for the student seems to occur at the transition from the conception of knowledge as a quantitative collecting of facts to the conception of knowledge as the *qualitative* assessment of contextual observations and relationships. According to Perry, where knowledge is contextual and relative, the instructor's task is less atomistic as the student's is more integrational. The good instructor becomes one who supports in his students a more sustained groping, exploration, and synthesis. Also, the educator must be open—visible in his own thinking, groping, doubts, and styles of commitment.

Practical Teaching Applications: First, in light of their epistemological limits, we should give students options in the content of their essays, requiring primarily that their method of development provide a reasonable frame of reference to give direction and value to their facts. Second, using inductive problem-solving assignments will force students to create, support, and be responsible for frames of reference, for hypotheses with reasonable probability. This reasoning skill helps students in composition courses, other courses, and in life in general. Finally, as regards literary analysis, Perry's scheme allows

the student to approach a given work of literature without trying to guess The Interpretation. The student needs only to place the facts of the piece into a reasonable frame of reference. For more detail on applying Perry to literary analysis, see Paula Johnson, "Interpretation Games," *College English* 41 (October 1979), 136–146.

Reviewed by Donald Heidt

Books for Students to Think With, to Write With

Ann E. Berthoff, **Forming, Thinking, Writing: The Composing Imagination.** Rochelle Park, New Jersey: Hayden Book Company, Inc., 1978.

Purpose: To show that writing is related to "everything you do when you make sense of the world." The book is not a conventional handbook, rhetoric, or reader. It comes closest to being a rhetoric, but stresses "thinking and forming" more than audience and tone.

Major Thesis: Students "like to think if they think they can." The interrelationship between critical thinking, reading, and composing processes is stressed. Learning to write is learning to think.

Summary

Part I: The Making of Meaning

1. Composing: The composing process is a continuum. Composing begins when we start to think about a problem. It includes being puzzled and mistaken and making wrong assessments, for writing is related to the kind of thinking we constantly do when we try to make sense of the world.
2. Observing: Students should keep a journal, and write 10 minutes a day in response to a natural object. Examples from students' journals on a bit of branch, a milkweed pod, etc., are included.
3. Seeing Relationships: Short but difficult paragraphs illustrate "the mind in action" by poets, philosophers, artists, and psychologists, followed by comments on each. Each selection is followed by suggestions for student paragraphs. Students should explore the whole process they employ, from getting ideas to dreaming, and write down everything in their notebooks as they grope toward meaning.
4. Forming: A summary of the main points includes:
   a. The composing process by which we create meaning is a continuum.
   b. Relationships are central in defining meaning.
   c. Language is our readiest means of creating, discovering and encoding meaning.

Part II: A Method of Composing

Introduction: The Auditor and the Sheep Dog

Forget trying to figure out what you want to say ahead of time because only in the act of composing can you know what you want to say. The process of writing, though usually more difficult, is related to that of conversing.

1. Getting Started: An assignment especially applicable to community college students analyzes how simple lists (such as Christmas lists or lists of what to look for when you buy a used car) illustrate organization and underlying assumptions that are part of the composing process. It shows how to deduce some characteristics of the list maker. Naming and defining also aid in the process of bringing order out of the chaos that precedes the making of a list. Excellent exercises are included. A formula that the author calls HDWDWW (How Does Who Do What and Why), on p. 70, helps students move from responding to things, such as objects and figures, to the more difficult task of writing about ideas. The formula is clearly and interestingly illustrated by the author's own response to the word "snowshoes." Although she has had no personal experience with snowshoes, by employing her formula, she is able to develop spatial, temporal, and practical relationships suggested by the word.

2. Forming Concepts: When you develop concepts, five sentence patterns can "form the core of your repertory" (page 81):
   a. A structure for listing and naming. (The items listed can be in the form of single words or groups of words.) _____, _____, _____: _____. Lively, beautiful, sad: Western Ireland is never more inviting than when it seems forbidding.
   b. A structure to relate condition and results, cause and effect. If _____, then _____. If chaos is thought of as a source, then it is less frightening to the composer.
   c. A structure for articulating a comparison with a difference. Just as _____, so _____; but if you consider _____, then _____. Just as soap operas feature stereotypes, so Chekhov in his stories develops types; but if you consider how individualized they are, then you can see that it isn't the types but what you do with them that makes the difference.
   d. A structure for stating differences with something in common. However _____, _____. However various the appearances are, the basic pattern can be seen.
   e. A structure for restating with a great degree of specificity or generality. _____; _____. Some artists don't mind chaos; Paul Klee considers it a "natural place to start."

A subsection on defining takes the student beyond reliance on dictionary definitions, illustrates tautological thinking in defining, and provides effective illustrations of how to derive class names from specifications about the name to be defined. It also seeks to aid

students to recognize the dangers of either too much or too little explicitness.

3. Developing Concepts: Berthoff challenges two "absurd" admonitions often given to students: "Show, don't tell" and "Don't generalize." These are unrealistic choices, since a writer must sometimes both show and generalize. In the latter case, the only valid question is how much detail is needed to support a generalization.

   Berthoff also challenges the easy distinctions that some claim to make between fact and judgment. She shows how our ideas about facts change. "What you take as fact will depend on your experience, your memory, your power of reason. . . ."

   Images are also a way of seeing relationships and will express an attitude toward a subject: "Come to Marlboro country," for instance, or imagery in poetry. (Some excellent assignments appear on pp. 132-33.)

   Writers may also articulate relationships through analogies, fables and parables.

   Still another type of relationship is causality. Four main ways of thinking about causality are useful to the writer (page 148):
   a. Causal choices (For want of a nail the shoe was lost, etc.)
   b. Cause/effect
   c. Establishment of motive and purpose in order to account for results
   d. Aristotelian analysis

4. Gathering, sorting, gathering: Berthoff makes an important distinction between revising and correcting. Revising is an important part of the composing process; correcting is not. Students sometimes confuse the two, thinking they have revised a paper when they have merely corrected errors in it.

   Paragraphing, according to Berthoff, is not a mere matter of indenting, as it often seems to be in newspaper writing. It is a means of "bundling" ideas. You can learn to evaluate and improve your paragraphs by following this process:
   a. Composing a brief marginal gloss for each paragraph; (see page 159).
   b. Paraphrasing any suspicious sentences. Doing so helps to assess strengths and weaknesses and to determine whether you've said what you wish to say.
   c. Considering the paragraph as an answer to a question. If you can't formulate the question, you probably don't have a paragraph.

   You can test both unity and coherence by referring to the gloss. You can also improve unity by eliminating excessive use of the verb "to be." In reviewing a paragraph for coherence, you'll simultaneously be conscious of emphasis, of the need to subordinate in order to avoid "boxcar" sentences. Other choice subverters of emphasis are jargon and cliches.

5. Finishing:
   a. Write an abstract of the paper as a check on unity. If the paper is under 600 words, the abstract may be a single sentence.
   b. See how the marginal gloss for each paragraph relates to the abstract.
   c. Check the introduction against the conclusion.
   d. Finally, check transitions against the marginal gloss.
6. Correcting (Editing): Keep in mind that "in the real world a statement of protest that you and your co-workers have researched carefully and which you are certain will change hearts and minds will be read by others with consternation, contempt, disbelief, *if it is read at all.*"

   Even an excellent paper will be downgraded if it is presented in a careless way.

   A suggested technique for correcting: Read each sentence separately, *beginning at the end of the paper.* Starting at the end forces you to consider each sentence separately. These errors in particular become apparent: wrong word choices, mixed metaphors, mixed constructions, mangled comparisons and differentiations, and logical confusions. (All of these errors are discussed and illustrated.)

Part III: Construing and Constructing

Working Rules:
1. Work within the specifiations of the assignment.
2. Establish a schedule that takes into account the amount of time needed for typing or writing out a clean copy.
3. Work out a system of taking notes, but don't be a slave to it.
4. Don't throw anything away until your paper is finally copied.

Complaints, Queries, and Suggestions:

In this section Berthoff gives excellent answers to some frequently-asked questions and responses of students. (We've heard them all many times. Here are some useful replies.)

1. Q. "How can I write about something I'm not interested in?"
   A. "One way to approach it is to consider who might care, even if you don't."
2. Q. "You keep talking about how we should start writing right away, about chaos and all that. But I was told always not to start writing until I knew what I wanted to say. I thought you were supposed to have an outline. . . ."
   A. "The composing process starts and stops and starts again; it goes in circles; it spirals, it can involve 'being in the dark.'"
3. Q. "I start out with what I want to say, but then I get a new idea and I can't fit it in, so I scratch out what I've written and start over again. I keep doing that."
   A. "Keep starting and keep beginning; just don't throw anything away."

4. Q. "I didn't mark my book or take notes when I did the reading because I didn't know what to look for."
   A. "Glossing paragraphs and writing one-sentence abstracts are more effective techniques than underlining and highlighting."
5. Q. "I don't know how to say what the author says without just quoting him."
   A. "Once you firmly establish that you are paraphrasing, you can write without announcing the fact continually."
6. Q. "I just tossed that off, but you liked it; what I really worked on—that was the one you didn't like."
   A. "'Really working' bears no necessary relation to quality. Sometimes you write quickly and well because the subject is one you feel strongly about."
7. Q. "But that's what I meant! How can you say I didn't say it when you've just been able to explain what I meant?"
   A. "One of your primary tasks is to learn to differentiate between what you meant to say and what you did say."

Evaluation: This book is much too difficult to use as a text for freshman composition students in community colleges. However, we include it here because the instructor would find the following sections of it especially useful:

Part II

Getting Started—how to use lists as springboards to compositions, the formula HDWDWW (How Does Who Do What and Why?), application of formula to essay on snowshoes

Forming Concepts—five basic sentence patterns for showing logical relationships

Developing Concepts—section on difficulty of determining what is fact

Gathering, Sorting, Gathering—composing marginal glosses and abstracts

Correcting—reading each sentence separately, starting at the end of the essay

Part III

Working Rules

Complaints, Queries, and Suggestions

Reviewed by Nina Theiss

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Peter Elbow. **Writing Without Teachers.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Purpose: The author wants to convince the reader that students can learn to write without formal instruction. Like many current writing

gurus, Elbow asserts that the old prewriting steps do not really work; thus, we should abandon the idea of the outline and start writing.

Major Thesis: The act of writing helps writers sift and select what they want to say, as does having a real audience. Students should spend about four hours writing, editing, and rewriting several versions of a piece before it is presented to a peer group.

Summary

Chapter 1: Freewriting Exercises

The most effective way to improve your writing is to do free-writing exercises for a minimum of 10 minutes at least three times a week. Just put down something, whatever is in your mind. This freewriting must never be evaluated in any way. It helps you pour more attention, focus, and energy into what you write. It allows you to put the garbage in your head onto paper and into the wastebasket before it infects your thinking. Elbow suggests keeping a freewriting diary and using freewritings for finding subjects to write about. The main usefulness of the exercises is not in their immediate product but in their gradual effect on future writing. A series of such exercises can produce a better short piece of writing. All the writer need do is pick out the good bits, strip away the rubble, and concentrate on the truths that remain. (How a writer knows rubble from good bits is not indicated.)

Chapter 2: The Process of Writing—Growing

Think of writing as an organic process; you should start writing at the very beginning—before you know your meaning at all. Control, coherence, and knowing your mind are not what you start out with but what you end up with. Writing is a verbal transaction whereby you free yourself from what you presently think, feel, and perceive. Growing and cooking are both the metaphors and models for Elbow's writing process. An example he gives of the process in action has the writer churning out four versions of a piece over a four-hour period, writing for 45 minutes at a time and then thinking about the piece and editing it for 15-minute periods. (How a student might be motivated to do four drafts is not indicated.)

During rewriting, thoughts on the subject change and the piece seems to grow. (Elbow notes only the writer has grown, not the words. "You are a living organism. Your words are just dead marks on a piece of paper.") He says that to use his process you must start writing and keep writing, putting down the wrong words until you get the right ones. Working with a plan or outline will block growth, he warns. Writing a lot at the beginning overcomes anxiety. Beginnings are the hardest. Once you have something to edit you can figure out what you really mean to say, get it unified and into the best words, throwing away the rest. Every word omitted keeps another reader with you.

Chapter 3: The Process of Writing—Cooking

Cooking means getting material to interact. Look for disagreements rather than agreements in your streams of thought. Make as many metaphors as you can. Add analogies, comparisons, examples. Change modes, switching from formal to informal, first person to third person. Just write and keep writing.

Chapter 4: The Teacherless Writing Class

It is a class of seven to twelve persons. It meets once a week at least. Everyone reads everyone else's writing. Everyone tries to give the writers a sense of how their words were experienced. The goal is for the writers to see and experience their own words through seven or more persons. You need a committed group of no more than 12 in a class and all must be writing. A diverse group—poets and businessmen, for example—is preferred by Elbow. Everyone should get copies of what has been written and the material should be read aloud twice with at least a minute of silence after each reading. Fifteen to twenty minutes should be devoted to comments, and Elbow gives advice to both readers and writers on how to respond. No kind of reaction is wrong, since Elbow says both readers and writers must recognize they are always right and always wrong. Don't quarrel or stray in talk from the writing. Do give specific reactions to specific parts.

Chapter 5: Thoughts on the Teacherless Writing Class

Teachers look for something the matter in student writing, treating the work as an exercise instead of real reading. A teacher is too good a reader. Participation in a couple of encounter groups and in a therapy group conducted by a psychoanalyst helped Elbow discover how helpful responses from a broad range of people can be.

Practical Teaching Applications

Teacherless writing groups have functioned successfully for years in the form of writers' clubs. Such groups can be set up in classrooms as Elbow notes, but dedicated, motivated students are needed. And participants presumably would have at least a reading background that would help them separate the good from the bad; Elbow himself provides no standards. He has some useful ideas about how to comment on writing in a group discussion.

Reviewed by Charles Donaldson

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Ken Macrorie. **Telling Writing.** New Jersey: Hayden, 1980.

Macrorie argues persuasively that most college writing—indeed, much writing in general—is pretentious, ponderous, and dishonest, what he aptly calls "Engfish."

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To get rid of such fishy prose, Macrorie recommends that students write freely about topics that interest them, allowing truths and the natural rhythms of speech to flow. Later comes the process of tightening, sharpening, and forming these free writings into finished papers. To help with this process, Macrorie suggests that students read their writing to each other in a "helping circle," at first offering only praise, later more constructive criticism. The many student samples of writing in each chapter demonstrate that Macrorie gets what he is after—writing that is personal, lively, and honest.

However, Macrorie does not offer much help for the student who needs to learn about taking essay exams and writing the sort of papers required by most four year colleges. He considers such writing damaging to one's "truth-telling habits." Nor does the book offer much advice on how to edit a piece of writing. Out of 22 chapters, two discuss how to tighten (chap. 4) and sharpen (chap. 18) writing; one talks very briefly about form (chap. 16); one about the order of words (chap. 21); and a final chapter covers punctuation. Most beginning writers need more than what he offers, particularly since they are expected to criticize the writing of others, and to edit effectively their own writing.

Of special importance in the book are chapter 2 on free writing, chapters 5 and 6 on surprise as an element of good writing, and chapter 9 on how to use the helping circle of readers.

Students like using this book. Its tone is pleasant, its attitudes liberating, and its advice, clear and memorable.

Reviewed by Alan Lamson

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Ira Shor. **Critical Teaching and Everyday Life.** Boston: South End Press, 1980.

Purpose: In a pervasive mass culture like ours, liberatory teaching/learning has relevance in an Open Admissions college setting. This book is a record of what was accomplished, under trying conditions, by teaching critical thinking.

Summary:

Chapter I: The Working Class Goes to College

Although cradle-to-grave schooling, driven forward by industrial growth, has become a reality, the great national debate is over the decline of literacy, the breakdown of discipline, and the eclipse of reason.

The expansion of the community college system provided for the absorption of surplus people and money, thereby warehousing the masses.

Listed below are some problems inherent in a nationwide community college system:

1. building academic monuments to class bias and imperial bad taste
2. a layer of schooling inferior to the rest of academe
3. training more workers than the job market can absorb
4. using the system for "cooling-out," diverting a large proportion of students from four-year institutions
5. the disturbance of academic repose—the serenity needed for cultural and intellectual growth yields to frenzy, even busyness for its own sake
6. the desocialization of women
7. the denigration of the liberal arts
8. the diminution of the egalitarian mode
9. the development of adult education in place of full-time, degree-bearing work

Chapter II: Interferences to Critical Thought

Liberatory learning means growth in awareness of power and powerlessness. Daily life becomes subject matter. For example, the student becomes aware of the wasted, illusory power involved in concentrating on "beating the system," and sees how debasing is constant haste. Vocational teaching, by contrast, often retards rather than encourages thought.

Chapter III: Extraordinarily Re-Experiencing the Ordinary

This chapter focuses on the following subjects:

1. Paulo Freire's method of literacy training, including a long discussion of human-culture making powers
2. how teachers can lessen their initiating/organizing function
3. the critical study of ordinary life; tying mental work to real life
4. the use of comedy as a valuable resource
5. the establishment of a workshop-type classroom

Chapter IV: Monday Morning: Critical Literacy and the Theme of 'Work'

It is helpful to look at the teaching practice of Freire's literacy teams, educators who study the life and language of their prospective students. Trained in the technique of dialogue, the teams have found that they need only seventeen generative words and thirty hours of classes to provoke literacy.

Examining work provides a means to develop literacy and consciousness and is an alternative to the traditional study in grammar.

The process of organizing an untraditional class in a traditional school requires easing alienation. One technique is to allow students to give the kind of opening speech they expect their teacher to give. Others are prewriting, exploratory diction, and the use of speech grammar for correcting writings whose "work" themes are particularly relevant.

Chapter V: Learning How to Learn

The most visible pedagogical problem is the underdevelopment of reading, writing, and critical thought. Shor recommends the use of Utopian courses for remedial students: this problem solving technique starts with having students describe a life experience, moves to their diagnosis of what's right or wrong, and ends with their preparing a resolution.

Chapter VI: Social Inquiry

Among language projects, successful ones included rewriting the U.S. Constitution, writing nonsexist marriage programs, designing democratic by-laws for the classroom, and preparing a special issue of the school newspaper. *Unsuccessful* projects included writing a "student survival handbook" and developing a mock-radio show.

Chapter VII: Question Sexism

Marriage, an obvious subject around which to design study in almost any discipline, provides an excellent arena for raising consciousness. Using Anne Sexton's "For My Lover, Returning to His Wife," the teacher is able to teach diction and a literary genre. One sees how to structure and restructure reality from a feminist point of view. This prolonged attention to marriage raised consciousness while developing stronger literacy and conceptual habits of mind.

Chapter VIII: Culture Against Itself

A creative writing class where both mass culture and high culture can be assimilated gives students an opportunity to shape the languages and images of the medium. Shor had a number of his former remedial students in the class, and he witnessed the relation of ego-retardation to intellectual development. In this learning process the students emerge both as subjective actors and as writers whose scenes were eventually videotaped.

Reviewed by Joyce Mills

Bridging the Gap—Student to Professional

Joseph M. Williams. **Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace.** Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman, 1981.

As Williams says, "This is a short book based on a simple thesis: It's good to write clearly, and anyone can." Dealing only with style, this prescriptive text addresses mature writers, whether on the job or in school, and it focuses on what it sees as their most serious problem: sentences that are wordy, tangled, and overly complex. Williams claims, "Its lessons will tell you in a straightforward way how to write clearly." They do.

Williams approaches style as process, and specifically as something achieved through the process of rewriting. Except for Lesson One, which presents an impassioned case against bureaucratese, legalese, academese, and all their misbegotten relatives, each of the ten lessons gives practical, specific advice on one aspect of good prose. Their order follows the sequence that Williams finds most helpful when he edits his own work:

Lesson 2. The Grammar of Clarity: "Try to state who's doing what in the subject of your sentence, and try to state what that who is doing in your verb."

Lesson 3. The Source of Wordiness: various kinds of redundancy, meaninglessness, and excess.

Lesson 4. Controlling Sprawl: ways of breaking up excessively long sentences and also some good advice on joining clauses.

Lesson 5. Sustaining the Longer Sentence: coordination (parallelism) and its problems, modifiers and theirs, and short-to-long order.

Lesson 6. Sentences in Context: the principles of emphasis and cohesion.

Lesson 7. Some Special Problems: writing for less able readers or writing about complex subjects; includes the appeal of the specific and concrete, the importance of appropriate order, the signaling of connections, and the grouping of data into manageable units.

Lesson 8. A Touch of Class: "a few ingredients of a moderately elegant style," including balance and symmetry; emphasis and rhythm; metaphor, simile, and image.

Lesson 9. Style and Usage: rules that characterize standard English, rules that are folklore, and rules that careful writers observe.

Lesson 10. Style and Punctuation: both the standard rules and the niceties of sensitive usage.

Williams' advocacy of clarity and conciseness isn't novel, of course; most manuals of composition endorse these qualities. The problem is that few say much about how they can be achieved: a handful of *before's* and *after's* and some mumbling about redundancy, and then the student is on his own. Williams, on the other hand, offers simple, explicit rules for making the transformation. For example, his prescription for cleaning up long compound noun phrases is to "try unpacking the phrase. Start from the last noun and reverse their order, rewriting the string into explicit prepositional phrases."

He suggests ordering coordinate elements from shorter to longer, advises letting adjectives with modifying phrases follow their nouns, and recommends maintaining the momentum of a long sentence by placing shorter elements before the verb and longer ones after it.

He demonstrates that cohesiveness and flow *between* sentences can be increased by following this principle: "The beginning of a sentence should orient a reader toward new information, should provide a context for him to move from the known to the unknown, from the predictable to the unpredictable." At the same time he sensibly acknowledges the many exceptions to his rules and points out the compromises that must be struck among the requirements of emphasis, cohesion, clarity, economy, and English grammar. Each lesson includes exercises on which the student can try out Williams' precepts; the answers are in the back of the book.

All of Williams' rules describe strategies that good writers eventually discover for themselves. But his book can shorten the learning process by months or years, and it articulates the principles that elude most of us when we try to explain to an otherwise competent student his weaknesses of style. It's fine to say "It *sounds* better" to a writer who already has a sensitive ear, but the average freshman or sophomore is still tone deaf. The rules can keep him more or less on key and at the same time help him to hear the difference between well-written sentences and his own. As for the less mature writer who clings to short, simple sentences as his one refuge in a dangerous academic world, the rules can give him the security to try an occasional syntactical adventure.

The book is a find for courses in advanced composition, technical writing, creative writing, and for the rare freshman comp student who already writes correctly: he can work independently in this text while his classmates struggle with grammar and punctuation.

Reviewed by Rae Ballard

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William Zinsser. **On Writing Well.** 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

Purpose: Growing out of a course taught by the author at Yale, the

book attempts to answer the questions most often asked by writers, editors, educators, businessmen, and other people concerning writing or the teaching of writing. In answering these questions, the author also attempts to demystify writing so that it can be made to sound human even in such institutions as businesses, law firms, school systems, and government agencies.

Major Thesis: Good English is good English whether it is written by a journalist, a novelist, or a business executive. Do not assume that bad English may still be good journalism or that good sociological writing may be bad English. A writer of good English is one who has learned to control his material.

Summary

Chapter 1: The Transaction

For some writers, writing is easy and pleasant; for others, it is difficult and painful. There is no one correct method of writing. There are all kinds of writers and all kinds of methods. Nevertheless, writers share one characteristic: vulnerability and tenseness. All writers are driven by the compulsion to put some part of themselves on paper. This is the personal transaction that is at the heart of all writing. Out of it come two of the most important qualities that this book is in search of: humanity and warmth.

Chapter 2: Simplicity

Because clutter is the disease of American writing, one secret of good writing is to strip every sentence to its cleanest components. Every word that serves no function, every long word that could be a short word, every adverb which carries the same meaning that is already in the verb, every passive construction that leaves the reader unsure of who is doing what—these are the adulterants that weaken the strength of a sentence. Uncluttered writing is hard work, not an accident. Very few sentences come out right the first time, or the third. Keep thinking and rewriting until you say exactly what you want to say.

Chapter 3: Clutter

Writing improves in direct ratio to the number of things we can keep out of it that shouldn't be there.

Examples: free (up), head (up), face (up to), (personal) friend
twenty-two (short) minutes later
(at the present time) now
(Are you experiencing pain?) Does it hurt?

Beware of the long word that is no better than the short word.

Examples: (numerous) many, (remainder) rest

Leave out phrases like "I might add," or "It should be pointed out." Just add or point out. SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY

Chapter 4: Style

Style is organic to the persons doing the writing. It is as much a part of them as their hair or lack of it. *Trying* to add style is like adding a toupee. The point is that writers who strain for style will not look like themselves. The fundamental rule is: Be yourself.

Chapter 5: The Audience

There is no such thing as a mass audience. Every reader is a different person. Don't try to guess what sort of thing editors might want to publish or what you think the country is in a mood to read. Editors and readers don't know what they want to read until they read it. Your best guarantee of an audience is to perfect your craft and to be who you are.

Chapter 6: Words

The death of freshness is obvious in much of today's journalism. This death results from a writer's failure to reach for anything but the nearest clichés. Examples: "shouldered his way," "only to be met," "crashing into his face," "waging a lonely war," "corruption that is rife," "sending shock waves." The way to fight this dreary kind of writing it to care deeply about words. The race in writing is not to the swift but to the original. Cultivate the best writers; get in the habit of using dictionaries; don't scorn Roget's *Thesaurus*. Be aware of the sound of words.

Chapter 7: Usage

In general, it is best to be liberal in accepting new words and phrases, but conservative in grammar. Examples of useful new words: "moonscape," "meltdown," "printout," "unisex," "afro," "pantyhose," "skyjacker," "feminism," "consumerism," "wetlands," "biodegradable," "sexist," "lib," "macho," "uptight," "paraprofessional." Good usage consists of using good words if they already exist—as they usually do—to express oneself clearly and simply to someone else.

Chapter 8: Unity

Unity is the anchor of good writing. It keeps readers from straggling off in all directions and it satisfies their subconscious need for order. Observe the following unities: of pronoun, of tense, of mood.

Chapter 9: The Lead

The most important sentence in any article is the first one. If it doesn't induce the reader to proceed to the second sentence, your article is dead. Each sentence must tug readers forward until they are safely hooked.

1. The lead must capture the readers.
2. The lead must provide a few hard details that tell the readers why the piece was written and why it should be read.

Chapter 10: The Ending

Like the minister's sermon that builds to a series of perfect

conclusions which never conclude, an article that doesn't stop at its proper stopping place is suddenly a drag and, therefore, ultimately a failure. The perfect ending need not begin with "In sum . . ." Rather, it should take the reader slightly by surprise and yet seem exactly right to him. When you're ready to stop, stop. Once you have presented all the facts and made the point that you want to make, look for the nearest exit.

Chapter 11: The Interview

Learn how to conduct an interview. Here are some rules: 1. Look for the human element. 2. Keep your notebook or paper out of sight until you need it. Take a while to chat so that both you and the person you are interviewing can relax. 3. Make a list of likely questions. 4. Beware of the tape recorder; it may cause a rambling interview. 5. If the person is speaking too quickly, tell him to stop until you can catch up. 6. Type out your notes when you get home. 7. Single out quotations that are important or colorful. You will find that much of what the interviewee said was redundant. 8. Offer the smallest package to your reader; cut out trivia.

Chapter 12: Writing About a Place

People and places are the twin pillars on which most nonfiction is built. When writing about a place, you will want to evoke a special mood and describe something different about the place. Most descriptions about places are bad because the writer is over enthusiastic. Focus on significant details. Forget all syrupy words and groaning platitudes ("roseate," "wondrous," "fabled").

Chapter 13: Bits and Pieces

This chapter consists of small admonitions on many points. Examples: 1. Use active verbs unless there is no comfortable way to get around using a passive verb. 2. Most adverbs are unnecessary. Don't say that the radio "blared loudly." "Blare" already connotes loudness. 3. Most adjectives are also unnecessary. Examples: "Yellow daffodils" and "brownish dirt." Make your adjectives only do work that needs to be done. 4. Prune out little qualifiers. Examples: "a bit," "a little," "kind of," "rather," "quite," "very," "too," "pretty much." Don't say you were "a bit" confused and "sort of" tired. Just be confused and tired. The author offers practical advice on punctuation, mood changers, contractions, overstatement, writing as a contest, the subconscious mind, dictation, and the human condition.

Chapter 14: Science Writing and Technical Writing

The rule here is that every complex subject can be made as accessible to the layman as a simple subject. Nowhere else must you work so hard to write sentences that form a linear sequence. This is no place for fanciful leaps or implied truths. Fact and deduction are the ruling family. Write like a person, not a scientist.

Chapter 15: Writing on the Job

This chapter consists of practical advice on how to get rid of pompous verbosity in bureaucratic writing. The chapter contains many examples of jargon.

Chapter 16: Sports

Good sports writing strives for freshness by avoiding exhausted synonyms. Words should be chosen with precision and fitted into situations where no other sports writer would put them. Red Smith is a good example of a sports writer who continues to use fresh imagery.

Chapter 17: Criticism

Several rules apply to good criticism: 1. Love the medium you are reviewing. 2. Don't give away too much of the plot. 3. Use as much specific detail as possible. Cite examples. 4. Avoid ecstatic adjectives.

Chapter 18: Humor

Writing humor is serious work. The heightening of some crazy truth—to a level where it will be seen as crazy—is at the heart of what the serious humorist is trying to do. Before being a humorist, the writer must be able to write good straight English. Again a variety of examples are offered.

Practical teaching applications:

Zinsser's book is a *practical* guide to good writing. Each chapter is packed with examples that demonstrate Zinsser's theories and rules. One of the most useful chapters is Chapter 13, which offers excellent specific suggestions for creating a simple, lucid writing style.

Reviewed by Jo Ray McCuen

Problems Looking for a Philosophy

Lanham, Richard A. **Style: An Anti-Textbook.** New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

Epigraph: And the things thought to be essential to a textbook—impersonality, numbered and labeled paragraphs, an obvious style, test questions at the end of the chapter—are they not death?" C. H. Cooley, *Life and the Student*

In witty, pithy style, the author takes on 1) composition teaching as usually taught today, 2) professional pretentiousness, 3) mob style —and the culture behind it. To return the national tongue to any sense of eloquence, elegance, and joy, we must turn again to a Renaissance-like pleasure in prose. Only a self-conscious pleasure in words and some taste for style and grace will keep Johnny writing when the earnest duties of the classroom disappear. The most fitting subject for his study in the "contentless" composition class is writing itself. The illusion that it is the thought that matters is the cause of today's stylelessness. Man's nature is artifice; he creates through words; he partially creates himself through words; thus the fallacy of the "clarity-brevity-sincerity" school of composition.

Chapter 1: The Problem and the Books

A pungent analysis of the scene today. Raises controversial issues that go to the heart of current writing problems.

Chapter 2: The Uses of Obscurity

Good and bad uses of difficult prose. Bureaucrats need wind to sound important, but also to avoid hurting people. The King James version of the Bible is more difficult than the New English Bible, but it retains life, personality, and dignity that the revision loses. Good writing owes a debt to the language as well as to the objective world.

Chapter 3: The Opaque Style

Draws a continuum of styles from playful to aesthetic to scientific and conceptual. Recommends that we (and our students) imitate styles to develop a sense of sentence shape and to get rid of tin ears (a national malady).

Chapter 4: The Delights of Jargon

Explores stylistic range from Hippie to professional. Recommends we bear the guff and bluff of the age by becoming connois-

seurs of jargon. Students should translate various jargons into English.

Chapter 5: Poetic Prose

Trains the ear. Read aloud, *con amore,* is Lanham's advice.

Chapter 6: Essential Hypocrisies

To play with styles is to play with roles, with ways of thinking, with ways of being. Let students try on various stylistic selves.

Chapter 7. The Ultimate Morality of Mind

Attacks mob style and all the evils the trivialization of language has wrought.

Reviewed by Patricia Simmons Taylor

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Hirsch, E. D. **The Philosophy of Composition.** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

Purpose: The book tries (1) to find a set of basic principles to guide research on composition, and (2) to use recent studies in psycholinguistics and our knowledge of the history of writing to determine what "good" writing is and therefore what the goals should be in teaching writing.

Major Thesis: Good writing makes good reading. Relative readability is the criterion proposed by history and recent experiments. *Relative* readability means ease of writing consistent with the purposes of the writer. For instance, Faulkner's more complex purposes could not be accomplished in absolutely easy prose whereas, say, Jack Smith's purposes usually can.

Summary

1. Written language is not merely secondary to or an adjunct of oral language. Writing requires its own specific skills because it must supply a total context for communication: a "semi-fictional" self and audience plus a self-contained message. Writing demands focus, direction, and constraints unnecessary in speech. It normalizes and standardizes oral language. Conservative in spelling and grammar, written language is flexible chiefly in its lexicon. Because writing differs from other disciplines, it should be taught separately, not subsumed under the teaching of literature, logic, or even rhetoric.

2. The clause is the basic perceptual unit. When we read, we suspend judgment as to the meaning of a clause until we reach the end. We employ "short-term" memory—which lasts only about twelve seconds—after which we abstract meaning and free short-term memory for interpreting the next clause. What follows from this is:

(a) style is short-lived; we remember meaning, not linguistic structure (the aesthetic, emotional longevity of style is not addressed); (b) clauses should be kept fairly short to ease reading; and (c) any help we can give the reader in abstracting core meaning from clause to clause facilitates reading. The author emphasizes the use of connectives, transitional words, and relating words, and the importance of maintaining a consistent point of view—same person, tense, voice when possible.

3 Readable prose is predictable. The need for psychological economy governs good writing. A writer insures predictability when he narrows focus, uses topic sentences, and specifies concrete subjects. From the principle of psychological economy flow the following maxims: omit needless words, keep related words together, close up (complete) clauses as soon as possible, vary sentences, and narrow meaning to allow the reader's guesses as to what follows to be more accurate. Ease and adequacy of processing meaning also suggest why the paragraph must remain the unit of composition.

Practical teaching applications:

1. Written comment on individual student papers remains the most effective way of teaching writing because it is individual, permanent, and encourages improvement and expansion of skills.
   (a) The worst schoolmarm type of vice is to correct everything. The chief talent of the composition teacher is diagnostic skill. Articulate the two or three problems that most need attention.
   (b) Be positive. Students must know they can master the elements of their craft. Keep track of your comments to guide progress.
2. The teacher should use class time to work on revising errors common to the group. Listenability and readability are closely related. Students should read themes aloud to detect bad writing and then make passages more readable.
3. Every third assignment might be a revision of an earlier paper based on teacher's comments; to learn writing is to learn principles of revision.
4. Writing should be separated from final grades to avoid an adversary relationship between writing and grades.
5. Criteria for textbook selection should be based on the following principles:
   (a) Authority: To date, there have been mountains of research in composition. The research was done, however, by untrained persons with the use of uncontrolled variables and it resulted in unsophisticated statistical inferences.
   (b) Attractiveness: Above all, the text should be *slender*—to practice the brevity we preach. It should foster the teacher-student-paper focus mentioned above, using only terms and techniques the students can actually use.
   (c) Scope: The text should not be narrowed to the college essay only.

(d) Relevance: Reading texts should be relevant to student writing. To hold long discussions about the content of reading assignments is a dereliction of duty.

6. The evaluation of writing must take the entire culture into consideration. Teaching composition has been random partly because we can't agree on goals. These goals and the criteria they call for must come from the culture at large and not just from English department preferences. The public outcry against illiteracy is a great boon: demand fosters importance; stature attracts talent.

   Reading papers holistically doesn't seem to work. Graders differ in applying extrinsic (quality of thought, difficulty of project) versus intrinsic (fulfillment of purpose, organization, style) standards. Do we give an *A* to a perfect accomplishing of trivial intentions? Points to use in evaluation include quality of idea, organization, analysis, usage, sentence structure, style, punctuation, spelling, form, and legibility.

7. The following problems remain to be researched:
   (a) What pattern of writing assignment tends to promote the fastest improvement in writing?
   (b) How many essays should be assigned?
   (c) In what order should essays be assigned?
   (d) What kinds of essays should be assigned (personal or intellectual topics)?
   (e) In what order should subjects like diction, sentences, and paragraphs be taught?
   (f) How much revision should be required?

Reviewed by Patricia Simmons Taylor

Research into Theory and Theory into Research

James L. Kinneavy. **A Theory of Discourse.** Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971.

Purpose: Kinneavy intends his theory as a comprehensive background to composition. He chooses the word "discourse" in preference to "composition," "communication," or "rhetoric," although all four words are to some extent synonyms. He sets out to describe discourse, declaring: "A theory of discourse will then comprise an intelligible framework of different types of discourse with a treatment of the nature of each type, the underlying logic(s), the organizational structure of the type, and the stylistic characteristics of such discourse." This first book, however, considers only the aims of discourse, not the modes. Kinneavy distinguishes modes from aims by saying: "We can evaluate, or describe, or classify, or narrate something—these are modes of discourse, but we cannot scientize or inform, or persuade, or literate it. These are *aims* of discourse." He apparently means that people use discourse to perform these functions, but he finds the aims embedded in the discourse. He sees the relationship between the two as the axes of a matrix:

Aims	Modes			
	narration	exposition	description	argument
referential				
literary				
persuasive				
expressive				

A second volume is to discuss the modes, although it has not yet appeared.

Major Thesis: Discourse can be classified usually according to its intended effects on the reader—its aims. These aims will intersect with the modes of discourse, so that it would be possible, for example, to cite a scientific narrative, a scientific exposition, a scientific description, or a scientific argument. The aim in each case is to refer the reader to an object and help him understand its nature.

Summary

The book is a useful compendium of rhetorical theory. Kinneavy introduces Bain's influential classification of rhetoric into narration, exposition, description, argumentation, and persuasion. He both explains and modifies it by referring to the triangle used in communications theory. The three points of the triangle are the encoder, the decoder, and reality, with the signal forming the inner space connecting all three.

He then elaborates his argument by distinguishing three parts to a piece of discourse: the non-linguistic components of the situation, the pragmatics of the text, and the purely linguistic components, syntactics and semantics. Discourse study is concerned with pragmatics, "the study of the situational use of the potentials of the language." A consideration of Roman Jakobson's classification, labelling language functions according to their focus on addresser, addressee, context, message, contact, or code, leads Kinneavy to differentiate four norms for the pragmatics of discourse. Thus he restricts the modes to four of Bain's classic set, and designates one of the modes an aim. (See the diagram above.) The bulk of the book expounds the four aims—referential, persuasive, literary, and expressive—with their various subdivisions.

Referential discourse is subdivided into scientific, informative, and exploratory. Features common to all referential discourse are reference to an external reality, an absence of personal involvement, and utilitarian purpose. Exploratory discourse asks a question, informative discourse answers it, and scientific discourse proves it.

The exposition of scientific discourse provides the occasion for a complicated discussion of logical validity, especially the difference between inductive and deductive logic. The section on *persuasive discourse* is basically a review of Aristotelian rhetoric, including the merits of appeals based on ethos, pathos, and logic. Significantly, Kinneavy chooses a political speech, not a written discourse, for detailed analysis—President Franklin Roosevelt's first inaugural address.

Describing *literary discourse,* Kinneavy attempts to discern distinguishing features of literature by citing the mimetic and expressive theories of art. Thus the aims of literary discourse are to imitate reality or to express feelings about it, and these aims are discernible.

Expressive discourse emphasizes the encoder, the sender of the message. It is intended to convey the writer's emotion to the reader and make the reader alter his view of the writer. Kinneavy chooses the Declaration of Independence as his example, because it expresses a newly realized self-image of the American revolutionaries.

Critique and assessment of usefulness:

The book is extremely useful as a reference, less so as a theory. A theory must perform three functions: it must explain phenomena,

predict, and be testable in principle. Kinneavy's theory fails to meet all three criteria. Generic designations only operate in written discourse until someone successfully stretches the genre—literary history is full of new genres arising out of old. Furthermore, the distinction of aims and modes is vitiated by Kinneavy's attempt to infer intention from structure. Intention inheres in the situation, in precisely those non-linguistic components that Kinneavy excluded from consideration.

The teacher of writing should not attempt to incorporate Kinneavy's classifications into his teaching, for these reasons:

- Kinneavy has a naive belief in a pre-existent reality. "The ultimate attempt of discourse to refer to reality . . . should . . . be grounded in the nature of reality, not the nature of language," he writes.
- He believes that discourse reveals its nature in its features, despite the logical impossibility of defining literature by anything other than social agreement.
- He categorizes with almost manic enthusiasm. His matrix has 16 cells, ignoring the subdivisions. To attempt so many distinctions would lead to assuming perspectives narrow enough to make reading ridiculous.
- Teaching students to distinguish even a percentage of Kinneavy's functions misleads them. Ultimately all these classifications collapse into two or three obvious ones. (It can even be argued that there is only one kind of discourse—persuasive.)
- Kinneavy's classifications would distract students from learning how to write in the present context, which is what they need to know. Instead of learning to recognize features, ambiguously interpretable, students should learn how to analyze the situation, so that they can write appropriately to accomplish their own purposes with a specific audience.

Reviewed by Ruth Mitchell

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Charles R. Cooper and Lee Odell, eds. **Research on Composing: Points of Departure.** Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1978.

Purpose: To question basic concepts of discourse theory and to expound new theories of the composing process in order to stimulate and provide hypotheses for research on written discourse and the composing process.

Major Thesis: Achieving a full understanding of composition will be difficult, requiring new questions, new research procedures, and patience.

Summary

A dozen major researchers in composition suggest directions they hope research will take. James Britton wants to investigate the demands different types of writing (transactional, expressive, poetic) make on both writers and readers. Richard Young and Britton both feel that more work needs to be done on the roles of invention and incubation. The problems of young children should be addressed: how can they be helped to start their writing, to find meaning through composing, to revise their work? How do the environments and various teachers affect the composing processes of young children?

Loren S. Barritt and Barry M. Kroll outline differences and similarities between written composition and speech and then suggest further research needed. Several other researchers want to test the theories of men prominent in the field: Kinneavy, Moffett, and others. Some others suggest further study of writing assessment, of the nature of discourse, and of the precise relationships beween writer, subject, and audience. Most of the research suggested builds on work already done in studying the composing process, not product.

Reviewed by David Jones

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Janet Emig, **The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders.** Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1971.

Purpose: To gather information about the aspects of composition emphasized in selected American schools.

Thesis: Persons—rather than mechanisms—compose; to understand, therefore, the composing process in human terms, it is important to study the behavior of students as they compose in order to determine what changes need to be made in the teaching of composition at the grammar and secondary levels (and by extension in remedial and developmental college composition courses).

Summary

Janet Emig discusses the literature—personal account, dialogue in letters, and critical analysis—which scrutinizes the writing process of professional writers like Gertrude Stein.

Emig finds conflicting data in *Warriner's English Grammar* and Gertrude Stein's description of the writing process. Stein speaks of discovery, creation, creative recognition, the creation that takes place between pen and paper; Warriner delineates the unvarying steps of 1) rough outline, 2) refined outine, 3) first drafts, and 4) revision.

Emig studied eight high school seniors from various schools around Chicago. Each student met four times with the author and performed specific tasks: each wrote two essays, one of which was composed aloud in the presence of the investigator; recorded a writing autobiography; and wrote an imaginative piece prior to the last meeting. For the two assignments written outside of the sessions, the student was asked to submit plans or drafts.

Emig provides the terminology for studies of the writing process. Her outline contains ten major points: 1) Context of composing, 2) Nature of the stimulus, 3) Pre-writing, 4) Planning, 5) Starting, 6) Composing aloud; a characterization, 7) Reformulation, 8) Stopping, 9) Contemplation of product, and 10) Seeming teacher influence on piece.

Under 2) Nature of the stimulus, Emig discusses the teacher-initiated assignment and its effects upon the writer. Significant considerations for the teacher are the following:

a) some students' inability to handle impersonal argument;
b) "blocks" resulting from a boring, threatening, or painful subject (e.g. about family life if a student is suffering a family crisis);
c) the need to provide enough variables for a writing assignment.

The author describes one of the eight subjects in detail, analyzing the entire case study of Lynn, an exceptionally bright student in the top five percent of her class, active in school and community activities. The investigator reveals some significant findings in this case:

a) Lynn chooses the "easy" subject; for her this means a topic that makes no psychic demands.
b) When the prewriting period is limited, Lynn, like other students, will choose a schema that has been learned and internalized (the five-paragraph essay or 500 word essay) and that requires no personal engagement of the writer.
c) Because of time restraints imposed in the school setting, writing assignments are preceded by very brief planning.
d) Students are not allowed to have blocks; writing must follow immediately upon receipt of the assignment.
e) Lynn regards writing as a task to be done rather than a creative process requiring incubation and gradual development and reshaping.
f) Lynn is concerned about word choice, idiom, connotation, and avoidance of triteness in her writing.
g) Lynn worries about technical correctness (spelling), titling, handwriting, and length—elements her teachers have stressed.

Emig summarizes the case studies of the remaining students and compares them to Lynn's situation. The students generally write in the three-, five-, and seven-paragraph theme format with three segments: introduction;

one to three paragraphs of development, each with an unmistakable topic sentence; and a concluding paragraph closely resembling the introduction.

Only one student prepares outlines; the others do little or no prefiguring for a school assignment of 500 or fewer words. They see revision only as a means of being direct, concise, and specific; moreover, they write to please the instructor and express no satisfaction in completion, writing only what is required and no more. Most remembered that in grammar school composition consisted primarily of spelling and grammar, that no real creative writing was taught.

Chapter 7: Implications

Emig's study leads her to these conclusions:

a) Emphasis on the five-paragraph essay limits students; the mode is produced routinely for the teacher to criticize and evaluate.
b) The extensive mode, although presented as the form most widely used by college students, writers, and business persons is, in fact, rarely found in the works of the best writers anywhere.
c) This monolithic way of teaching composition is partially due to teachers' illiteracy, for many do not read contemporary authors.
d) More serious yet, many teachers do not write, and for this reason their correcting becomes a "neurotic" focus on peripherals: spelling, punctuation, and length.
e) Students need to be given solitude and time for prewriting activities; additional time is needed for major reformulation or reconceptualization.
f) Students should be encouraged to do more reflexive writing, a kind of writing the less able students can perhaps do best.
g) Schools should shift the focus of writing evaluation from teachers to peers.

Reviewed by Rose Najar

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